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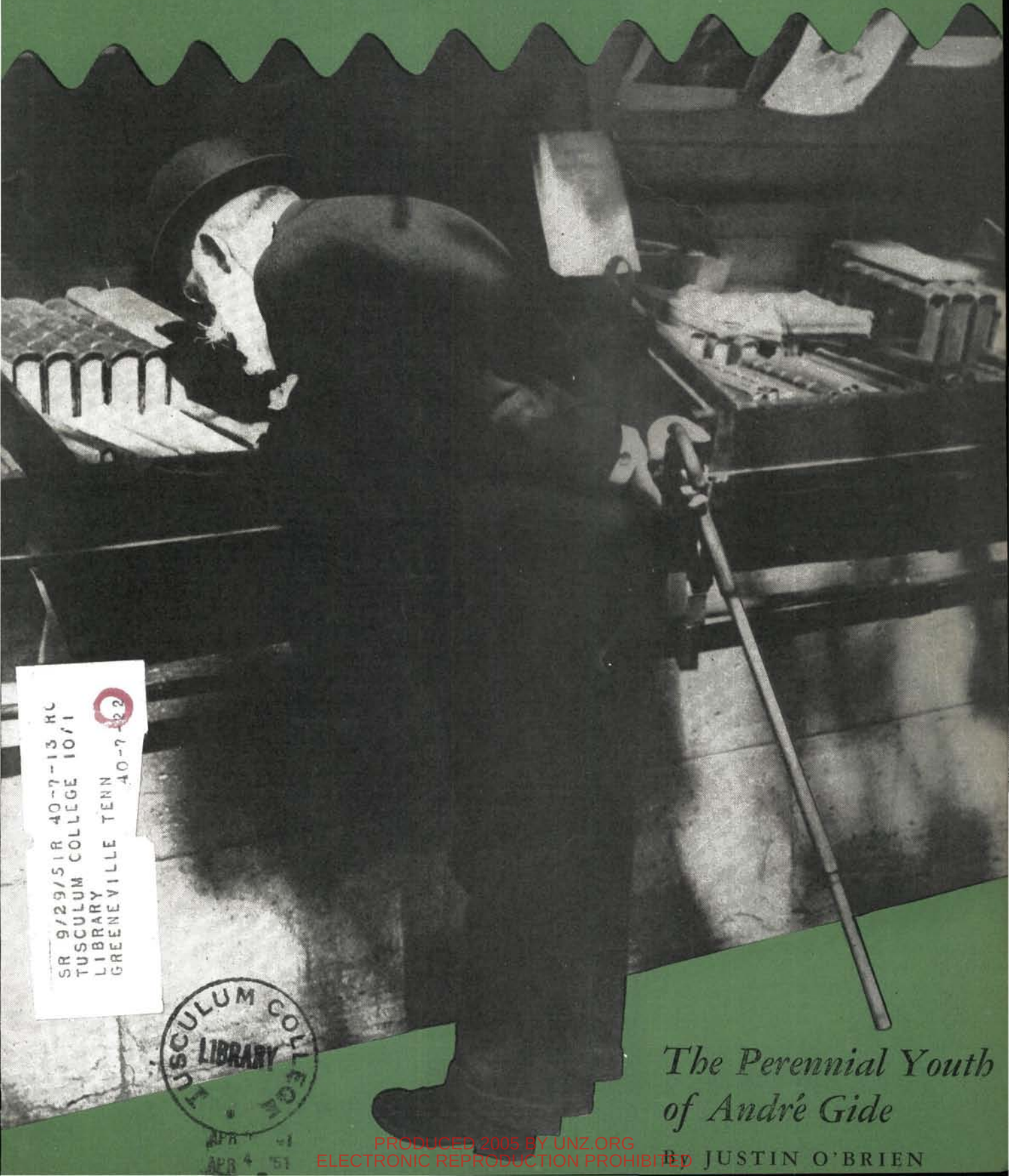

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By JUSTIN O'BRIEN

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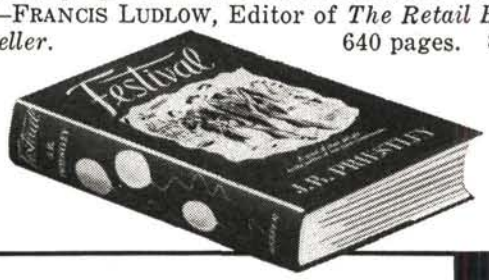

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March 31, 1951

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TRADE Winds

THE LITERARY SCENE

• • J. B. Priestley, in town to help launch his new novel, "Festival" (his best since "The Good Companions"), is a disillusioned man. His long-contemplated return visit to Wickenburg, Arizona, a town rapturously lauded in his "Midnight on the Desert," was an unqualified bust. Gone were the simplicity and charm of an unspoiled frontier town; in their places were a string of gaudy cafés, juke boxes, and neon lights. "Who caused this horrible metamorphosis?" Priestley demanded of an old acquaintance. The bitter answer was, "You and your blasted book. Tourists began flocking here the day after it was published!"

Priestley tells about a dour-visaged, portly farmer from the Midland country in England who lumbered into the headquarters of the Tory Party in London and inquired, "How much does it cost to join?" "A half guinea," an official replied. "But surely you haven't waited until this stage of your life to become a member of the Conservatives?" "That I haven't," the farmer exclaimed, "but it's only since this damn Labor Government came into power I've been able to afford it!"

• • In Philadelphia the Curtis Publishing Company celebrated the fifth birthday of *Holiday,* most successful new luxury magazine of the postwar era. Its circulation now tops 800,000, and its annual advertising revenue is over $4,000,000. Chiefly responsible is brilliant Editor Ted Patrick.

• • In New York Doubleday moved to dazzling new offices in the recently completed skyscraper at Fifty-seventh Street and Madison (once the site of the Parke-Bernet Galleries). Putnam's also moved to Madison Avenue —number 210. From his new eyrie on a clear day Prexy Mel Minton of Putnam's can now watch this column actually being written—a thought which should give him pause. Amy Loveman (a cherished founder of *SRL*) was honored with a post on the editorial board of the BOMC, Lillian Friedman replaced Joe Margolies as buyer for Brentano's, John Delaney resigned as sales manager of Macmillan, and Naomi Burton got married to Ned Stone. The things that go on while a fellow's away!

• • In "Lifemanship," to be published by Holt on April 13, Stephen Potter offers a solution for a problem that vexes many an industrialist ten times daily:

"As for telephone management, Gattling would never under any circumstances speak to any man until his secretary had got not only his secretary but the actual man himself speaking on the phone. It was, in fact, rather amusing to see him ring up Tipping, who was equally keen on the same procedure. They devised a means by which after a count of five both started *talking simultaneously.*"

• • In Chicago a bookseller complained to Twayne Publishers that a customer had purchased a copy of "A Dictionary of Underworld Lingo"—and paid for it with a counterfeit five-dollar bill.

• • In university clubs and brokerage houses hundreds of unmarried plutocrats are trembling in their boots lest luscious Doris Lilly's forthcoming exposé, "How to Meet a Millionaire" (Putnam), prove their undoing.

• • In Tinicum, Pennsylvania, James Michener as a result of "South Pacific" receives a steady flow of queries from people who are dreaming of settling on a South Sea isle. So far he actually has arranged jobs for two applicants. Recently a third would-be fugitive asked Jim's advice about a position in Tonga, one of the finest island groups. What worried him most was that the climate might not agree with him. Michener reassured him as best he could and sealed the letter. Just then a winter hurricane broke and trees started falling across the road like match sticks. He tore open the envelope and added a heartfelt postscript: "If you don't take this job in Tonga you're a damn fool." (Michener's new book, "Return to Paradise," is the BOMC selection for May.)

• • In Detroit a seven-year-old protégé of Harvey Campbell's held up a picture of Abraham Lincoln and gravely declared, "This is the man who frayed the sleeves." "You're a bit off the beam," explained Harvey. "Mr. Lincoln is the man who freed the slaves. The President who frayed the sleeves didn't come along until many years later."

• • A new publication of the Columbia University Press is W. W. Appleton's "A Cycle of Cathay"—which may account, suggests Fon Boardman, for the receipt of an order for one copy, rushed, of "Japanese Bicycles." Fon had better begin hoarding those tidbits; he's taking over this column for the University Press issue on June 16.

• • In their bustling bookshop on Rockefeller Plaza Babs and Addie Liveright wish it known that they are "irritated, exasperated, and annoyed" by the constant mispronunciation and misspelling of their name. "It's such a nice, simple, two-syllable name: Live-wright," they say, "but for some reason everybody insists on calling it Liv-er-ight. They don't say Shak-espeare or Col-er-idge, do they? Why pick on us?" The ladies also have envelopes addressed to Livewright, Linewriter, Loveritt, and Liverwurst. . . . The Sheaffer Pen Company, of Fort Madison, Iowa, has even more trouble with its name than the Liveright girls. In one single morning's mail Sheaffer was misspelled twenty different ways.

• • In bookshops the country over James Jones's "From Here to Eternity" is fulfilling all the extravagant prepublication predictions made for it. It's a fine, vibrant book—and would have been even finer with 200 of its 860 pages judiciously scissored. Another novel already causing the advance inner-circle buzzing that every author and publisher prays for is Irwin Shaw's "The Troubled Air," headed for even bigger sales than his "The Young Lions." Those two superb non-fiction leaders "Kon-Tiki" and Boswell's "London Journal" continue on their merry way. And I'd like to put in a pitch for one of the finest and most provocative books I myself have read in many a moon: Alistair Cooke's "A Generation on Trial."

• • In the *Hollywood Reporter* Irving Hoffman printed a letter about the woes of motion-picture exhibitors that makes the outlook of the retail bookseller positively glowing by comparison—and also bears out my contention that TV is seducing ten movie addicts to every one bookworm:

> In one small town the first-run theatre had exactly ten people on the orchestra floor during the afternoon performance of one of Hollywood's important properties. A sub-

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sequent-run house showing a Western had a few more people, but not enough to keep the theatre warm. And the manager was more concerned with hiding the water fountains, so people would have to buy soft drinks to slake their popcorn-induced thirst, than with anything else.

I saw all the extremes of what one movie critic in the Midwest described to me as "the motion-picture business's unbelievable plant depreciation." Peeling walls, carpets dirty beyond any color recognition, drapes caked with dust, loose and squeaky seats with broken springs, and brass that had never heard of polish. The marquee signs were a jumble of letters of different sizes, dimly lit (which may have been just as well, since as often as not there were misspellings of the stars' names).

In the big cities I saw a different kind of "plant depreciation." I saw movie palaces, beautifully kept, with wonderful locations in the heart of town, glittering rococo lobbies, lush seats, clean rest-rooms—and balconies permanently closed because not enough patrons were coming in to fill the orchestra. The manager of one of these houses confirmed what the movie critic had said. The theatre, for all its glitter and downtown location, was obsolete, he said. The downtown location was bad because people couldn't drive down in the evening. There was no place for them to park their cars, even if they succeeded in getting through the downtown traffic. And with the city spreading out farther and farther into the suburbs, he told me, everybody was traveling by car.

The glittering lobby was obsolete, too. "If they took this same amount of space and devoted it to a parking lot," said the manager, "my business would double. As it is my company is building theatres in the new suburbs and doing fine with them. The young married couples drive over in five minutes from their homes and find plenty of parking space, instead of wasting half an hour getting downtown and then having to shell out parking fees to some garage. And it makes a lot of difference, too, if they can save an extra hour's fee to a baby sitter. Let's face it: this big movie palace was built for the city of twenty years ago, not today."

• • Near the Kingsport Press in Tennessee a southbound bus makes a scheduled midday stop of twenty minutes so that passengers may freshen up and grab a bite to eat. One driver has been heard to deliver the following oration as he brings his bus to a stop:

"Folks, we'll be stopping here for twenty minutes. This line makes it a strict policy never to recommend an eating place by name, but if anybody wants me while we're here I'll be eating a wonderful T-bone steak with french frieds at Tony's first-class, spotlessly clean diner directly across the street."

—BENNETT CERF.

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Books of The Times

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

THIS is an important day in the world of books. It marks the introduction to American readers of a brilliantly gifted young English novelist. Geoffrey Cotterell, who looks enough like the American movie actor, Dana Andrews, to be his brother, seems certain of international fame. At 31 he combines an impressive knowledge of human beings with masterly literary craftsmanship. His ironic novel, "Strait and Narrow,"* is much the best novel I have read in the last three or four months. It might easily turn out to be one of the half dozen best novels of 1951.

Geoffrey Cotterell

Geoffrey Cotterell has been writing professionally since he was 17. He spent six years as commander of an anti-aircraft battery during the war. Since then he has had four novels published. "Strait and Narrow" is the fourth, but his first to cr[illegible] three are [illegible] injustice.

This i[illegible] the life [illegible] the [illegible] not [illegible] has a [illegible] Cotterell is [illegible] hilarious caricat[illegible] his attitude toward [illegible] tached.

Richard Tarrant [illegible] superb full-length portrait of a young man on-the-make. Richard was clever, snobbish and vain, hypocritical, unscrupulous and vast[illegible] ambitious for success, fame and wealth. To attain his ends he was quite willing to [illegible] short cuts which took him far from the straight and narrow path. But Richard in his calculating selfishness is no mere object of easy satire. He is a subtly developed, psychologically fascinating person, and by no means an entirely unsympathetic one. Mr. Cotterell always maintains a sure balance, which leaves one deploring much of Richard's coldly scheming conduct while at the same time understanding how natural his motives were to him.

Most of "Strait and Narrow" is told from Richard's point of view. Part of it is told from his wife's. Nancy was a nice girl, impulsive, loving, not very bright. But she was only one of the three women in Richard's life. The others were Blanche, the great influence of Richard's law student days at London University, and Annetje, the Dutch aristocrat who had sheltered him in her home after his bomber was shot down. Blanche combined in one person at least three ill-matched people: a sophisticated intellectual, a sophomoric doctrinaire Socialist, and a schoolgirl filled with "hockey-girl enthusiasms." Annetje was the wife of an underground leader, a brave, kind, fine woman who made the mistake of loving Richard.

Modern England Reviewed

"Strait and Narrow" is worth reading for the thought-provoking quality of its characterization alone. But it is outstanding on several other counts. It is an extraordinarily readable narrative filled with dramatic tension. Mr. Cotterell's unobtrusive prose is crisp and sure, his dialogue revealing and entertaining, his restraint in satire astonishing. So many novelists resort to gross exaggeration when they attempt satire. Mr. Cotterell's cool, deft incisions are far more lacerating than the furious flaying more commonly employed.

"Strait and Narrow" is primarily a sedately [illegible] study of the effects of selfishness, hypocrisy and unscrupulous ambition, it is also an [illegible] review of numerous other matters in modern England which Mr. Cotterell finds little to [illegible] taste: the self-righteous arrogance of Social-[illegible] intellectuals, the oily frauds of Conservative [illegible] industrialists seeking to make illegal profits on the black market (Nancy's father), the vapid [illegible] selfishness of the newly rich (Nancy's mother), [illegible] futile efforts of Nancy's country-club set to [illegible] capture the spirit of pre-war gaieties, the foggy [illegible] and ignorant minds of left-wing idealists (Richard's parents) and the exasperating virulence of poverty too nobly borne (Richard's sister).

It may be that the American reading public, accustomed to Mr. Marquand's satirical wit and Evelyn Waugh's farcical satire, will be slow to recognize the merits of Mr. Cotterell's graver approach. Let us hope not, for this is a first-rate novel, original, mature, perceptive and highly finished.

Reviews like this testify to a transatlantic conquest

*STRAIT AND NARROW. By Geoffrey Cotterell. 384 pages. Lippincott. $3.50.

J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY
Philadelphia New York

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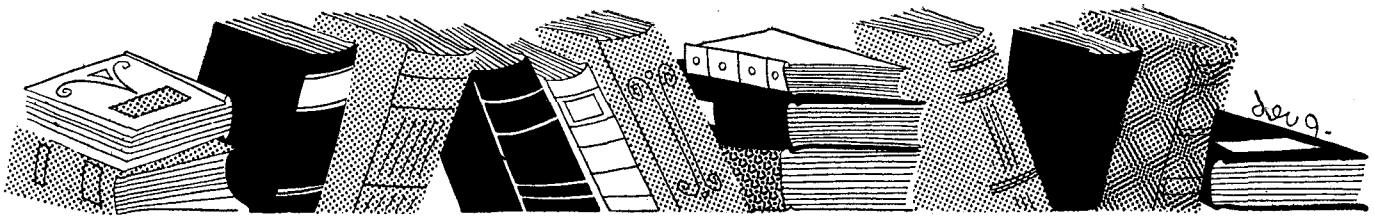

The Perennial Youth of André Gide

JUSTIN O'BRIEN

—*Doreyne.*
Justin O'Brien

"I HEARTILY scorn," André Gide wrote at the age of sixty-one in his "Journal" for January 1931, "that sort of wisdom that is attained only through cooling off or lassitude." We must not then expect to find him even twenty years later, soothing himself or his reader with the maxims of senility. In the fourth volume of his "Journals," written between his seventieth year and his eightieth, his mind had lost neither its incisive vigor nor its vital warmth. We find the same disciplined intelligence freely expressing itself, equally removed from facility and dryness, in a constantly maturing thought which is as far from smugness as it is from feverish restlessness. Ever in contact with life, that intelligence maintained a perpetual ardor—the hard, gemlike *ferveur* which his "Fruits of the Earth" extolled over fifty years ago. This was doubtless the secret of Gide's perennial youth and of his undiminished favor with the young.

Rich with the lessons of experience, a man in his eighth decade must of necessity take many a backward glance. The Second World War naturally suggested parallels with the First one; voluntary exile from France and loved ones recalled the past and even the dead. Problems encountered in writing and fresh attacks launched by his enemies caused him to review his judgments of earlier works: in 1942, for instance, and again in 1946 he reconsidered the significance, effectiveness, and artistic achievement of his "Corydon" and again returned to that book through an interviewer's indiscreet question at the time of the Nobel Prize Award. Several times he turned back to the period of his flirtation with Communism, the better to define the misunderstanding which led to his position of the early Thirties. And the postwar emphasis, largely among the existentialists, on the necessity of committing oneself and writing a *"littérature engagée"* led him to re-examine his past commitments and eventually to issue in 1950 under the ironic title of "Littérature engagée" a collection of his tendentious and polemical writings, all of which he considered as extra-literary. Indeed, he had already noted in mid-1940: "The social question! . . . If I had encountered that great trap at the beginning of my career I should never have written anything worthwhile."

But, like his own Theseus venturing into the unknown while unwinding his link with the past and tradition in the form of Ariadne's thread, André Gide found it more natural to look forward. Even in the early stages of the war he foresaw with remarkable clarity the postwar plight of France; elsewhere he reflected on the literature and art of the future. Despite his extensive travels and those he undertook the moment Tunis was liberated, he deplored the fact that the map was still studded with territories unknown to him. Finally, but without dread or false solemnity, he frequently meditated on death and the possibility of an after-life. Some of the finest pages of this latest "Journal," in fact, reflect a serene contemplation of his own—of everyman's—future.

Nothing was perhaps more characteristic of André Gide than this consistently healthy forward-looking attitude. Not altogether lightly he early identified himself with Prometheus, who revolted against the gods and communicated to man "the devouring belief in progress." That active belief never left him. Recognizing his inaptitude for contemplative stagnation, he could state at seventy-three that "real old age would be giving up hope of progress." Thus it is that, smiling at his impulse to improve himself so late in life, he continued the study of German, exercised his memory by learning hundreds of lines of French verse by heart, and, rediscovering Virgil, devoted three or four hours a day to the arduous and delightful deciphering of Latin. His mind always open and alert, he reread the French classics and Shakespeare and Goethe and Euripides, often revising his impressions with startling results. Leaving the main highway, he explored such diverse writers as Cyril Tourneur, Eichendorff, Grimmelshausen, James Hogg, Dashiell Hammett, Pearl Buck, Jorge Amado, and Ernst Jünger. In his eightieth year we find him discussing the latest volume by Sartre, catching up on the contemporary dramatists, disputing with Koestler and James Burnham. Simultaneously he could become captivated, as in the past, by a new treatise on radioactivity, a study of the metamorphoses of sea animals, a history of Moslem customs, or a revolutionary approach to surgery. A lively curiosity was always one of his dominant characteristics.

SINCE the fourth volume of the "Journals" covers the period of the Second World War the reader might justly expect conflict and the occupation of France to play a large part

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in André Gide's reflections from day to day. In the beginning, however, he deliberately planned to omit events, noting that thought was most valid when it could not be modified by circumstances. In September 1940 he reflected that "the number of stupidities an intelligent person can say in a day is not believable. And I should probably say just as many as others if I were not more often silent." In contrast to the invasion of the timely, to the anguish resulting from current events, there is always the timeless, to be found in the classics of art and literature. In an article dated 1936 he had written: "I have a great need to maintain in myself the feeling of permanence; I mean a need of feeling that there are human products that are invulnerable to insults and degradation, works on which temporal changes have no influence."

But viewed without perspective the timeless often appears to be merely the untimely; to some it may seem shocking that only a month after the French defeat of 1940 Gide could momentarily forget his country's tribulation by reading Goethe in the original. Throughout the "Journals," to be sure, from 1889 to 1949 thoughts out of season abound: *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*, to borrow from Nietzsche a title that Gide obviously liked. Almost equally frequent are statements to the effect that the artist is "out of harmony with his time" and that this constitutes his *raison d'être*: "He counteracts; he initiates. And this is partly why he is so often understood at first by but a few" (July 6, 1937).

Yet, whether in the south of France for the first two and a half years of the war or in North Africa for the duration, Gide was unable to maintain such an ideal aloofness. Never do his "Journals" come so close to journalism ("I call 'journalism' everything that will be less interesting tomorrow than today," he wrote in 1921) as during the long siege of Tunis in 1942-43. There we have a marginal history of events recorded by an eyewitness whose vision was necessarily limited, a sort of "Journal of the Plague Year" with all the dispassionate, flat reportage of Defoe's document. There is a fascination for us who were on the outside in sharing the intimate feelings of a particularly sensitive person on the inside of the vast concentration camp set up by Hitler. Despite Gide's effort to heighten and enliven that account by a running description of the child Victor, a portable microcosm of all that was distasteful in the world around him, nonetheless this is the part of the "Journals" that will doubtless age least well. Several times in recent

With a French Accent

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years André Gide had expressed the desire for simultaneous publication of those pages in French and English, in the naive hope, unshared by his French publisher, that such a delicate attention would somewhat mitigate the sting of his remarks about the American forces in Tunisia. But Americans are hardly so susceptible as not to appreciate such frankness; the men who took part in the North African campaign should be interested in the way they looked to those they were about to liberate, especially since that view changed so drastically upon contact.

During the decade from 1939 to 1949 André Gide's creative activity did not slacken, for he wrote (in addition to this volume of the "Journal") the "Imaginary Interviews," a play entitled "Robert ou l'intérêt général," a book on Paul Valéry, "Autumn Leaves," and "Theseus," which last should come to be considered as one of his major works. Meanwhile he finished his inspired translation of "Hamlet," compiled an "Anthology of French Poetry," wrote several prefaces including that for the collected edition of Goethe's drama, and with Jean-Louis Barrault adapted to the stage Kafka's "The Trial"—besides working on still unrealized film-scenarios of his novels "Isabelle" and "Les Caves du Vatican." One of the last entries in the latest volume of his "Journal" (June 4, 1949) states: "Some days it seems to me that if I had at hand a good pen, good ink, and good paper I should without difficulty write a masterpiece."

An index of Gide's continuing vitality can be found as readily in the attacks directed against him as in his own production. Throughout his long career he had been the object of frequent, often savage, assaults. If they are remembered at all in literary history, some of his accusers — such as Henri Béraud, Jean de Gourmont, René Johannet, Camille Mauclair, Eugène Montfort, and Victor Poucel—will receive mention only for the crude shafts they aimed at Gide. Others like Francis Jammes and Henri Massis have sullied their reputations by contributing to the picturesque and fanciful Gide legend.

DESPITE the intention of such critics, they did not bury their enemy very deep. During and after the recent war the weight of his years did not keep him from serving frequently again as whipping-boy. As early as July 1940 an anonymous journalist in *Le Temps* accused him of exerting a baneful influence on youth and contributing to the forming of a "deliquescent generation." A year later in California Fernand Baldensperger blamed the French defeat on such demoralizers as Gide, Proust, et al. In January 1942 René Gillouin echoed in Geneva an unfounded accusation of Gide's having led a susceptible young reader to suicide. Hardly had Paris been liberated than Louis Aragon, the literary spokesman of the French Communist Party, which could not forget Gide's return from Moscow, repeated the charge of anti-patriotism and defeatism made in the Provisional Consultative Assembly in Algiers by a certain Giovoni. Soon thereafter Julien Benda and Edmond Buchet separately accused Gide of anti-intellectualism and Alexandrinism, somewhat as Arthur Koestler was to do in English. Probably the most categoric crushing of Gide was found in an interview with the Catholic poet Paul Claudel, a contemporary and early friend, published in March 1947. "From the artistic point of view, from the intellectual point of view, Gide is worthless," said Claudel.

Gide himself was more equitable toward his former friend, for in February 1943 he noted in the "Journal":

> There is and always will be in France (except under the urgent threat of a common danger) divisions and parties; in other words, dialogue. Thanks to that, the fine equilibrium of our culture: equilibrium in diversity. Always a Montaigne opposite a Pascal; and, in our time, opposite a Claudel, a Valéry. At times one of the two voices prevails in strength and magnificence. But woe to the times when the other is reduced to silence! The free mind has the superiority of not wanting to be alone in enjoying the right to speak.

If there could have been any doubt before, there can surely no longer be any since the publication in 1949 of the correspondence between Claudel and Gide that to the world at large the name of Paul Valéry was less appropriate in the above passage than

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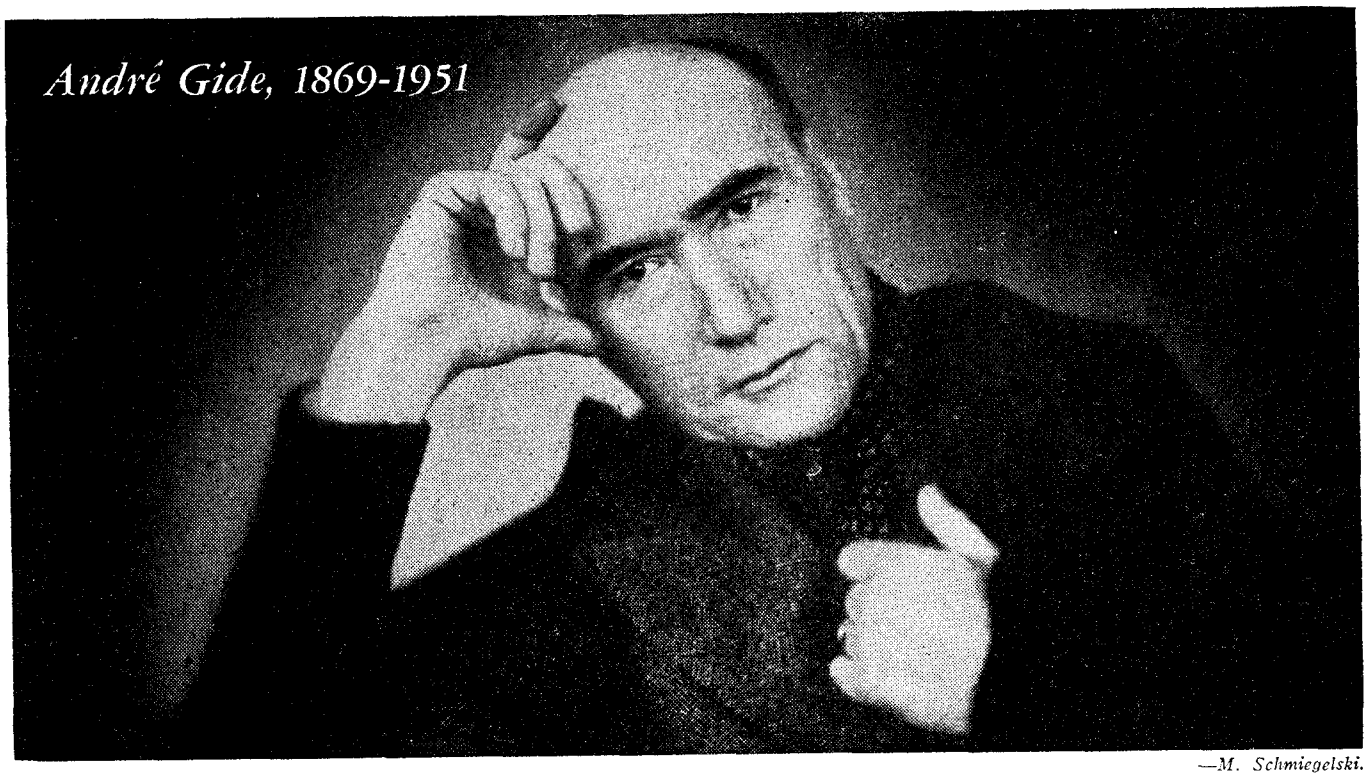
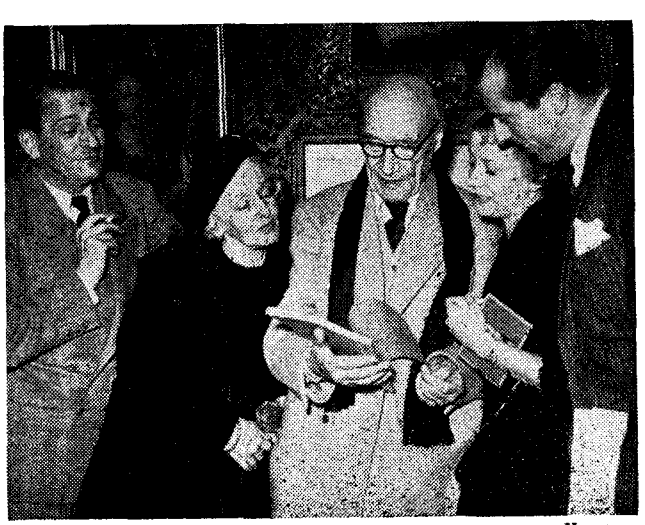


—M. Schmiegelski.

"The serenity to which Gide attained was . . . the classic balance toward which he had tended ever since youth."

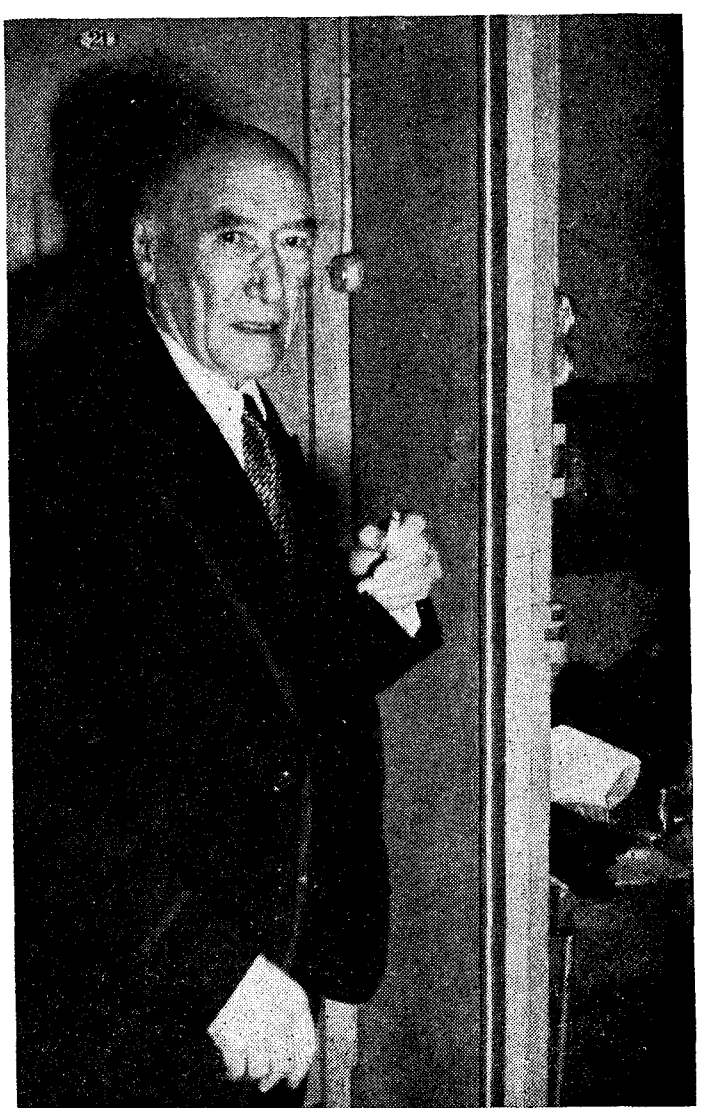
—Keystone.

Local farmers carry Gide to grave—"this elderly Faust."



—Keystone.

Gide and actors—"he early identified himself with Prometheus."



—Keystone.

"I . . . need to maintain in myself the feeling of permanence."

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would have been that of André Gide.

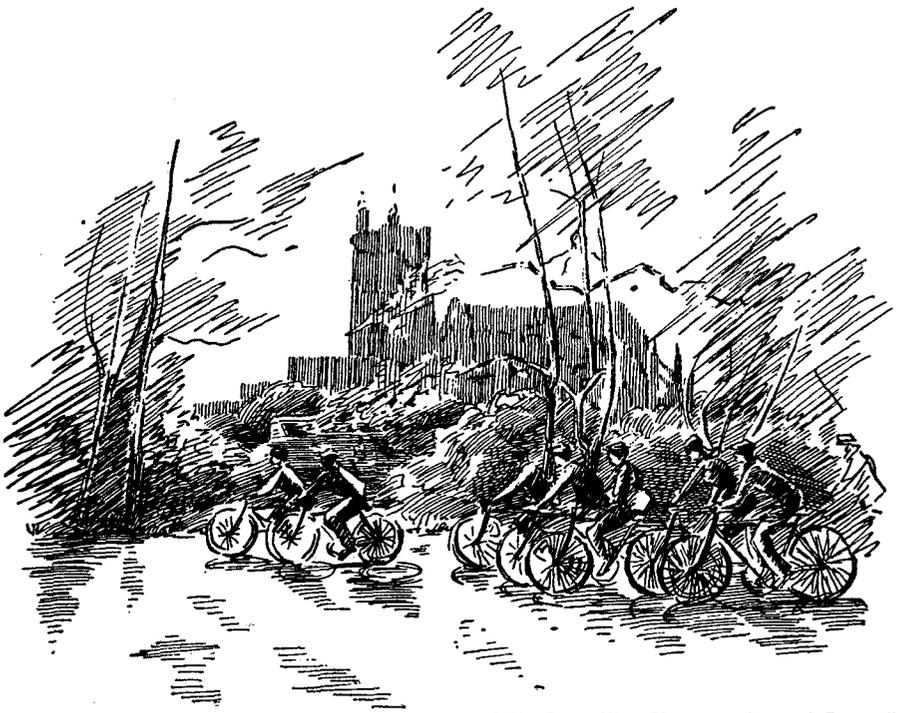
Another important Catholic writer, François Mauriac, who never ceased to admire and to acknowledge his debt to Gide, seems to have recognized this when, writing in *Le Figaro* about certain pages detached from the latest "Journal," he finds Gide's thought "serenely aggressive as on his finest days" and regrets that "this elderly Faust, who is so dear to us, should fix himself permanently in the definitive affirmation that man must be put in the place of God."

Coming from the pen of Mauriac the expression "serenely aggressive" is most appropriate. In his eighth decade André Gide *had* achieved a measure of serenity, manifest in his "Theseus" and "Autumn Leaves" as well as in his "Journal." One thinks of the Olympian serenity of Goethe, Gide's lifelong companion, and notes with pleasure that during the ten years covered by this volume Gide reread both the "Conversations with Eckermann" and Boswell's "Life of Samuel Johnson," as if recognizing the company in which he belongs. In fact, the complete "Journals," representing sixty years of a varied life, form one prolonged, intimate conversation, a single, often interrupted dialogue of the author with himself. Such a document precludes the necessity of any other interlocutor; after all, Montaigne had neither Boswell nor Eckermann. The serenity to which Gide attained was that of a dynamic equilibrium between opposing tendencies within him, the classic balance toward which he had tended ever since youth. Yet there was nothing static about this condition; as he noted in the "Journal": "The sole art that suits me is that which, rising from unrest, tends toward serenity."

On the last page of the most recent instalment of his "Journals" André Gide had scribbled a note implying that he had forever ceased to keep a journal. Since this was in fact the end of his long and rich self-scrutiny, the final distilation of his reflections on man and the universe, what definitive revelation or ultimate message does it contain for his readers? Those who followed him this far knew him better than to expect such a thing or be surprised by his note of December 15, 1948:

"*Last words* . . . I do not see why one should try to pronounce them louder than the others. At least I do not feel the need of doing so."

Justin O'Brien is professor of French at Columbia University. This essay will form the introduction to his edition of the fourth volume of Gide's "Journals" which will be published by Alfred A. Knopf on April 9.



—From "The Long Way Home: A Song of France."

Gide's "Pure Novel"

HENRI PEYRE

IN THE early 1920's André Gide, having already published several excellent short novels which he preferred to call "récits," some satirical and lyrical treatises, autobiographical and critical essays and having at last found or created his public, thanks to the acceleration of history caused by World War I, decided to write his first, and last, real work of fiction, "The Counterfeiters." The process of composition was a slow and laborious one, which the author revealed in full in the diary which he kept while struggling with many technical problems and with a rebellious inspiration. That diary, "Journal of the Counterfeiters," is now for the first time rendered into English by the excellent translator and interpreter of Gide, Justin O'Brien.*

When the novel appeared in 1926 it was hailed as one of the important fictional works of a brilliant decade which could boast of Proust, Martin du Gard, Mauriac, Joyce, Lawrence, Thomas Mann, Scott Fitzgerald, Dreiser, Dos Passos, and Hemingway. Our revised judgment after the lapse of a quarter of a century may be more detached. "The Counterfeiters," however, is a novel that must be reread and weighed with care as an achievement which did not attempt to please the readers of the day or to court facile approval. Gide, like Stendhal whose fascinating presence is often felt in these pages, repeatedly asserted that his aim was to swim against the current of his time and to win, if at all, in the Court of Appeal.

It took courage for an author already in his fifties to disappoint the public which was expecting from him more of the brief, luminous, tragic personal stories like "The Immoralist" and the admirable "Straight Is the Gate." Dauntlessly he sacrificed the smooth, classical beauty of his earlier fictional attempts, their closely-knit structure, their unity of point of view, and the tones of passionate intensity through which the author, writing in the first person singular, evoked the tragedy of his own life and the conflicts between the flesh and the spirit, orthodox morality and the search for a freer ethics, society and an individual athirst for sincerity.

"The Counterfeiters" was designed to puzzle the reader who expects a knot and a denouement in a novel, a

THE COUNTERFEITERS, WITH JOURNAL OF THE COUNTERFEITERS. By André Gide. Translated by Dorothy Bussy and Justin O'Brien. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 432 pp. $3.50.

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continuous narrative, description of cities, sceneries, homes, and individuals, some dramatic dialogue, and an accumulated intensity. Gide strove after a perilous ideal, which he defined as "the pure novel." (Willa Cather had called it "the novel *démeublé*," disencumbered of Balzacian description and of naturalist dwelling upon environment and physical realities.) A dangerous ideal, for the novel can hardly aim at the disembodied state after which some mystics and a few bold lyrical poets may aspire. Stendhal himself once confessed in a pregnant sentence the fault of which novelists too easily disgusted with drab, commonplace reality may be guilty: "I lay my nets much too high. Nothing low is ever caught in them." Gide refused to provide us with any particulars as to the color of the eyes or of the hair of his characters, their gestures or their gait, the aspect of the rooms or of the streets in which they lived. His contention was that the true novelist does not create with the actual data of real life but gives life to what was, before him, possible or potential.

Similarly, he spurned the usual virtues of the French novel, heir to the French classical tragedy: progressive continuity, growing tension, unity of tone or of impression. His temporary fascination with Dostoievsky induced him to attempt a multiplicity of plots. Each of them, and indeed each chapter, is a new start; the novelist refuses to take advantage of the momentum already acquired in the earlier chapters. The lazy reader is at first bewildered. The materials of fiction are not presented to him smoothly polished, endowed with logic and verisimilitude, in a silver bowl. Creative reading is required from him. He shares in the thrill of the novelist, completing with his own imaginative alertness the lineaments sketched in the enigmatic facets of the novel.

FOR the subject that obsessed Gide all along was the competition between the real world and our representation of it, the novelist's choice amid the confusion of reality and his point of view, in the Jamesian sense, which will comprehend, stylize, and perhaps immortalize human experience. Edouard, the protagonist, is a novelist himself (as well as a homosexual), interfering discreetly and beneficently in other lives, pulling a few of the strings, and confiding to his diary his own struggle to compose a novel also entitled "The Counterfeiters." Such a character is likely to grate on the nerves of not a few readers, mildly preoccupied with the technical prob-

(*Continued on page* 40)

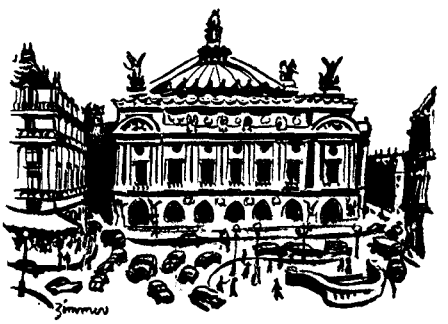
Stethoscope on France

ALBERT GUÉRARD

FRANCE'S tangled problems have received an admirable presentation by twenty-nine trained investigators in a book* so thorough, lucid, and well balanced that it will be indispensable to students of French affairs—which should include every qualified voter in the United States. We need similar books, sane and sympathetic, about the other major countries in the world—our sister provinces in Washington's "Great Republic of Humanity at large" (and we particularly need one about Russia). "Modern France" emerged from the three-day conference which was held at Princeton University in February 1950.

Thanks to skilful planning and editing the volume is no mere collection of random papers but a really thorough survey of the major problems of present-day France. Lest I be accused of unreasoning enthusiasm I must start with a few qualifications. The picture the book offers is sometimes a little blurred; this is the nature of all composite pictures, and each one of the twenty-nine authors could have composed a book which from the artistic point of view would have been more satisfactory. But, in this case, I believe that the reality of France is even more complex and more baffling than the presentation by Professor Earle's remarkable team. The contributors are all highly qualified specialists; they take for granted a certain general knowledge of French affairs which I am afraid is not universal even among Congressmen and diplomats. There should have been a brief narrative or at least a chronological table of events in the last ten or fifteen years. The authors barely allude to the appalling destruction caused, not by the original defeat, but by the Liberation: this is an essential point, not in economics alone but in the psychology of the French people. And in the larger perspective the swiftness of the recovery is vastly more important than the petty difficulties still being wrestled with. A book of this kind is apt to describe twenty-nine different species of trees and pay not quite enough attention to the forest.

* *MODERN FRANCE. Edited by Edward Mead Earle. Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press. 522 pp. $6.*



TO describe the forest from its very origins was the task entrusted to André Siegfried, and the overture he provided is worthy of that great scholar, internationally revered in his field. I was amused, however, by his relapsing into a racial psychology exploded ages ago. He rightly quotes Seignobos: "We are all mongrels"; but he adds: "To the Latins the French owe their gift for expression and their intellectual lucidity; to the Celts their artistic nature as well as their individual anarchism; to the Germans what they possess of seriousness and constructive capabilities." Now "Latin," "Celt," "German," have no meaning as racial terms; they are valid only in the linguistic field. There is no significant trace of purely Celtic, i.e., pre-Roman, art; and the Latins showed no lack of "seriousness and constructive capabilities."

The twenty pages—out of five hundred—on the French intellectuals are excellent but tantalizingly inadequate. Most of the writers are social scientists; they have not yet fully realized that art, letters, and religion are an essential part of a nation's life. Guided by the anthropologists they have all but eliminated Culture from their conception of culture. Voltaire, Rousseau, Chateaubriand, Renan, and Taine are more important to the understanding of France than the ministers, marshals, and millionaires of their day. A chapter by Jacques Maritain on the Catholic Church, for instance, was imperatively needed.

Even though each writer strove creditably for objectivity not every one was able to achieve it. The two chapters on Communism do make it plain why Communist propaganda appeals to at least one intelligent Frenchman out of four. But the chapter on Gaullism is, while factually correct, "an impartial presentation of Gaullism from the anti-Gaullist point of

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view." The chapter on the French Empire, while full of thought and facts, is vitiated by the radical and unreasoning anti-colonialism which is orthodox among American liberals. In these two cases the other side should have been more definitely stated. And both problems are among those of capital importance to the future of Franco-American cooperation.

INSOLUBLE conflicts appear in this book, because they exist in the nature of things. Richard Ruggles says: "France must make up its mind whether it wants to keep a large peasant class or is willing to take its place among modern industrial nations." I fully concur. But with France's scant natural resources an expanding industry could not absorb the surplus rural population. In other terms, the French population is well beyond the optimum point. Yet other papers still think of numerical increase as desirable, at any rate in the game of power politics and in order to provide cannon fodder.

Is it possible to draw definite conclusions from these honest studies, as guides for our own policy? Hardly. All the authors are committed to the Third Force; but without enthusiasm, for they realize that the Third Force is no force at all, only a tangled knot of weaknesses. All economists agree that the French bourgeoisie is hopeless: the *grands bourgeois* because they are blindly reactionary, the *petits bourgeois* because they are incurably timid.

France suffers from its excessive attachment to private (i.e. family) enterprise. The collectivism (i.e. big business) which is the strength of America can be introduced into France only through the State, as Louis Blanc prophesied over a hundred years ago. But the Socialist Party, which ought to be the center of power as in England and Sweden, is moribund; it may ultimately be reduced as in America to a single, revered, and elderly gentleman. The French will have no faith in America's aid unless America is ready to match their own efforts—not in terms of planes and guns but in terms of human lives—and unless America decides to keep a million men on the Elbe. But Mr. Hoover still represents too powerful an element for such a policy to be feasible; and even if it were decided upon, it would immediately let loose the very flood it is intended to stem.

The solution is adumbrated by Warren C. Baum, who endorses the ECA program of European economic unification; and it is obvious that political unification could not lag long behind. The symposium was held before the Schuman plan was fully presented. So the key to the problem of France lies beyond the limits of this book. France aspires to disappear as a separate national entity: the fulfillment of Hugo's prophecy: "O France! Thou art too great to remain a nation!" Scholars have to be "realists," that is to say they must study things as they are. But to study does not mean to accept. The deeper realities are the realities in the making. Not the future of the Third Force, juggle as it may with electoral reform, but with Europe, free, united, and Socialistic. That would be a Third Force indeed, standing between two rival doctrinaire fanaticisms, both of them drunk with power.

All the contributors agree that prophecy is vain. Forecasting might be the better word. Prophecy in the deeper sense is a call, a moral, a spiritual call, to purposive activity. Europe needs prophets. But a survey of European affairs reveals abysmal confusion. We cannot even apply the negative rule that whatever Russia proposes must infallibly be wrong. Russia is against American troops in Western Europe; but so is Herbert Hoover. Russia is against rearming Germany; but so are members of the Society for Prevention of World War III, all loyal Americans. Russia is against a European Union: but so is the British Labor Government, which has ruthlessly sabotaged the Strasbourg Assembly.

Experts study conditions but cannot indicate the path: man must choose according to his own conscience. But whatever the path this book will throw light upon it. And—a bewildering thought!—the wrong way, well-lighted, is less dangerous than the right way in utter darkness. May we choose wisely *and* carry a powerful lamp! This book will serve the purpose. Edward Mead Earle, who was the planner of the original conference as well as the book's editor, and his team have served France and America well.

Albert Guérard is a member of the faculties of Brandeis University at Waltham, Mass., and the New School for Social Research, New York, and a faculty member emeritus of Stanford University. He is the author of many books on France and French literature, including "The France of Tomorrow."

"Sometimes I wish I weren't so intellectual!"

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Toward the Limitless

THE SELECTED WRITINGS OF GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE. Translated, with a critical introduction, by Roger Shattuck. New York: New Directions. 272 pp. $3.50.

By Gerard Previn Meyer

TO THOSE readers of poetry and viewers of the plastic arts whose first instinct is to embrace whatever is traditional and reject what is new Guillaume Apollinaire said (c. 1916):

You whose mouths are made in the image of God's
Mouth which is order itself

Be indulgent when you compare us
To those who have been the perfection of order
We who seek everywhere for adventure

We are not your enemies
We wish to appropriate vast and strange domains
Where flowering mystery offers itself to whoever wishes to pick it
There are new fires there and colors never yet seen . . .

Pity us who fight always in the front lines
Of the limitless and of the future
Pity our errors pity our sins . . .

In these lines are exemplified the special qualities of the French poet of uncertain ancestry who sponsored the cubists and initiated the surrealist movement in both the plastic arts and literature. The lines are autobiographical but without egotism; they show a writer who lived in and for his art, his friends, his time, and "the future." They possess both a naive charm and a courageous boldness, tempered by wit and a melancholy consciousness of the dangers that beset those "who fight always in the front lines." And the military imagery recalls the poet's participation in World War I, which eventually cost him his life. The absence of punctuation symbolizes his defiance of boundaries, his striking out for "the limitless." There is a friendliness here, too;

—*Picasso.*

Apollinaire: "Pity our sins. . . ."

Apollinaire knew much of what he wrote would be derided and rebuffed, yet he wrote, "We are not your enemies."

The goal of Apollinaire in his poetry and of those who came after him, as it was the goal of his predecessor Rimbaud, was "to appropriate vast and strange domains / Where flowering mystery offers itself . . ." To reach this goal of "surreality" he found a reasoned approach insufficient; so in the cubist-surrealist fashion he broke the world up into its already fractured pieces and looked for answers to the riddle of self (personal and universal) in new combinations. So he was protean and looked for new shapes in his poems, some of which he fashioned into unique typographical arrangements ("calligrammes"); and in his imagery he was fascinated by such other protean things as rivers or skies across which drifted clouds ever-changing.

Poets and others can learn—have learned—a great deal from Apollinaire and his work. It is to Mr. Shattuck's credit that he has extended the range of possible disciples by his careful Introduction and his translations of selected verse and prose. The fact that "The Selected Writings of Guillaume Apollinaire" provides most of the original French text mitigates the occasional lapses of the English versions *en face*. I regret that the translator lacked the daring to attempt a duplication of the unique type arrangements; in this instance and in some others he has not quite met the poet's extravagance with his own.

Solution of Last Week's Double-Crostic (No. 887)

ALTICK:
THE SCHOLAR ADVENTURERS

The mass of Boswell Papers collected by Colonel Isham, kept* at Yale for eventual publishing, will throw light on the personalities and careers of a score of men and women whose names are found in every history of English literature.

**Changed from "acquired for" because of space limitations.*

An Epic of Faith

FRANCOIS de FÉNELON. By Katharine Day Little. New York: Harper & Bros. 260 pp. $3.50.

By Sheldon Cheney

THE AUTHOR of this book seems to have absorbed something of François de Fénelon's own clarity of style and directness of expression. She gives us a study of the personality of the seventeenth-century theologian and teacher that is unpretentious, discerning, and eminently readable. And she adds fascinating vignettes of life in the France of his time, of savage wars, of frivolities at court, of religious quarrels, and of the crossplay of political and church personalities. She discovers one persisting rock amid these chaotic currents—the mystic life—and pauses to go back and trace, briefly and admirably, the whole story of Christian mysticism. Fénelon, the matchless spiritual counselor, gracious as any courtier, courageous as any knight, utterly dedicated to God, is shown as acting out an epic life of faithfulness in this time of intrigue and failing faith.

If the author mutes the dramatic note, nevertheless there is shadowed forth one of the great tragedies of modern times. It was tragic not so much for Fénelon, who fought for the King and the Church until they acted together to disgrace him; who persisted in his loyalty to the colorful Mme. Guyon despite the unstable and at times hysterical elements that compromised her profound mysticism; who in banishment became more saintly, more perfectly the purified and dedicated spirit. The tragedy was rather that of Louis XIV, who at first liked and respected but later could not tolerate the independence he found in this churchman; of Mme. de Maintenon, the uncrowned Queen, caught between her warm regard for the priest and her cold ambitions; of the intellectual Archbishop Bossuet who persecuted both Fénelon and Mme. Guyon, sending the one into exile, the other to the Bastille—and then reflected before dying that both had attained to a degree of Christian spirituality he could never reach; and it was tragedy especially for the Church and France, for only Fénelon's dreams of salvation could have saved the one from further schism, the other from the Terror.

The story should be one of immense and immediate significance to any reader in these later troubled times, for François de Fénelon succeeded in showing forth in his living and in matchless essays the only possible way to peace.

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French Book Notes

THE MYSTERY OF BEING. Vol I: Reflection and Mystery. By Gabriel Marcel. Henry Regnery, Chicago. $3.75. The name of Gabriel Marcel is almost unknown on this side of the Atlantic. Like Sartre, he is a philosopher and a playwright, and his bibliography in both fields of endeavor is a long and distinguished one. Like Sartre, too, he is an existentialist. But, unlike Sartre, he is a Christian existentialist who was baptized as a Catholic in his fortieth year.

In this book, which is the first volume of the Gifford Lectures delivered at the University of Aberdeen in 1949 and 1950, he is concerned with the metaphysics of the self. It is a subtle inquiry, presented not as an architectonic system but as a series of connected reflections on the identity and nature of the self and the ways in which the self can transcend the sphere of the problematic. M. Marcel believes that in this broken world social organization, and especially the organization of the state, has become so complex that every man is in danger of becoming indistinguishable from his own identity card; he is a set of social categories, an object of sociological investigation. But we should not, we cannot, delegate to society the right to determine what we are, to answer the question, Who am I? The self is not a problem to be solved by sociology but a mystery to be approached by philosophy, and it is this mystery to which these lectures are addressed. They are so brilliant, so learned, so genuinely profound one can only wait with keen anticipation for the second volume, to be published later. —Robert Bierstedt.

ANATOLE FRANCE AND THE GREEK WORLD. By Loring Baker Walton. Duke University Press. $6. Professor Walton offers here the results of years of study and meditation on Anatole France as an exponent of the Greek. A student of the late Edwin Preston Dargan, whose monumental "Anatole France" stands as a landmark in American scholarship on France, Dr. Walton has been schooled in very rigorous and conservative techniques of research. It is reassuring to examine such a solid and forthright labor as this, in view of the current predilection among literary historians for "broad sweeps," the worry over "significance," and the self-consciousness regarding index cards. Only one note sounds apologetic: the advice to the casual reader to skip the meaty center chapters, those in which Greek literature and civilization are reviewed period by period in the light of France's attitudes and interests. Such a compilation represents an indispensable task, painstakingly undertaken with an eye to maximum use for students of France and Hellenism, though, to be sure, other parts are more readable.

In the first chapter (rather curiously entitled Modern Contacts with Greece) the author situates his subject in relation to the Greek revival which surrounded France's youth and the attitudes towards antiquity which prevailed subsequently. From lycée days on we follow France's education in Greek. In the later chapters Professor Walton turns to Greek pictures and themes in France's work and his use of Greek literary forms. We have here really a most illuminating study of literary creation. Through one work after the other we are shown how France's genius has fired the clay of historical material to produce such artistic masterpieces as "Thais" and "Les Noces Corinthiennes."

The book follows the usual plan of academic presentation. Each chapter concludes with a summary; an index and an ample, although not exhaustive, bibliography of primary and secondary sources are provided at the end. Consultation of heretofore unexploited collections of Franciana at the Bibliothèque Nationale and a rich personal culture enhance this work. —Laurence LeSage.

NAPOLEON'S MEMOIRS. Edited by Somerset de Chair. Harper. $7.50. Napoleon beguiled himself during the years of exile on Saint Helena by dictating to members of his staff, and these fragments were later published. By deleting numerous digressions and asides and arranging the most authentic passages in chronological order Somerset de Chair has compiled this one-volume text from the English translation made in 1823. However there is nothing new in this edition except the selection, the arrangement, and the fact that where Napoleon (following Caesar) referred to himself in the third person Mr. de Chair has substituted the first person singular.

As an "autobiography" these memoirs make heavy reading, although they are enlivened with four maps and three illustrations. They pause with the battle of Marengo in 1800, then resume with seventy-five pages on the Hundred Days in 1815—thus omitting the critical fourteen years when Napoleon bestrode Europe like a colossus. The style is succinct, judicious, and oppressively factual. It reflects Napoleon's dogmatic judgments on men and events, his ready transition from minor details to matters of major strategy, and his persistent preoccupation with problems of geography, climate, transport, matériel, and morale. This is a soldier speaking to soldiers and there is little glamour in it. Those who want to follow Napoleon's entire career at first hand and feel more sharply the electric shock of his personality should supplement it by reading R. M. Johnston's lively compilation, "The Corsican: A Diary of Napoleon's Life in His Own Words." —Geoffrey Bruun.

THE GLORY OF THE MEDIEVAL WORLD. By Régine Pernoud. Roy Publishers. $4.50. Mlle. Pernoud, a curator of the Musée de l'Histoire de France at Paris, is a student of medieval and modern art who was recently granted a Fulbright Award to investigate educational facilities in American museums. The volume under review is her first book. It received the Prix Femina de Critique et d'Histoire in 1946, has been translated with grace and lucidity by Joyce Emerson, and is illustrated with eight reproductions of medieval art.

Convinced that too many historians since the Renaissance have pictured the Middle Ages as a period of wholesale misery, oppression, and ignorance Mlle. Pernoud veers towards the opposite extreme. In her chapters on literature and art her sympathy and enthusiasm are assets and she recaptures much of the charm, quaintness, humor, and variety of the medieval poets and artists. But in her discussion of family relations, feudalism, kingship, and daily life "the glory of the Medieval World" dazzles her vision. She is certain that the famines, plagues, brutalities, and hardships have been greatly overstressed. "Everyone," she is sure, "had at least a colloquial knowledge of spoken Latin." The Inquisition seldom allowed the use of torture and only if there was "some proof at least of guilt," and it "left the accused at liberty until his guilt should be proved." Medieval feudalism was a benevolent institution cemented by mutual loyalty and respect—the Old Regime with its unwarranted privileges, exactions, and injustices was a corrupted development of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Despite its oversanguine assumptions and its gallocentric faith that the medieval world and medieval France were synonymous, this book is pleasant reading and contains some penetrating insights. It might be described as a romanticized interpretation of grimmer realities. —G. B.

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Fiction. *No single week of this spring season has brought a group of novels as fine in their individual ways as those reviewed below. Best known of the group is J. B. Priestley, who seems likely to repeat the success of his memorable "Good Companions" with a tale of Britain in 1951, "Festival." Herman Wouk ("Aurora Dawn") has written one of the tautest stories of the war in the sea-borne half of his "Caine Mutiny." But don't overlook the others: "The Morning Watch," by James Agee ("Permit Me Voyage"); "Conjugal Love," by Alberto Moravia ("The Woman of Rome"); and "Come Home at Even," by Le Grand Cannon ("Look to the Mountain"). The only disappointment of the week is Sinclair Lewis's "World So Wide"; there is sadness in the fact that it is a weak performance of interest only because it is the last work to come from his pen.*

Navy Regs to the Rescue

THE CAINE MUTINY. By Herman Wouk. New York: Doubleday & Co. 494 pp. $3.95.

By Lee Rogow

TUCKED away in the forbidding book of Navy Regulations is Article 184, which begins: "It is conceivable that most unusual and extraordinary circumstances may arise in which the relief from duty of a commanding officer by a subordinate becomes necessary, either by placing him under arrest or on the sick list . . ."

Consider the absolute monarchy of a ship at sea, especially a ship cut off from higher authority by communications failure. Consider this vessel, an old four-piper destroyer converted to a high-speed minesweeper, in danger of being hurled under by the awful power of a Pacific typhoon, the very storm which capsized four destroyers and caused such damage to the main body of the fleet that it was reckoned the worst American Naval disaster of World War II. Consider that this vessel is being maneuvered in the storm by a captain who has already proved himself a petty tyrant, an incipient paranoiac, and an incompetent in time of crisis. The captain has given the helmsman a heading which seems to all on the bridge to expose the ship to the fullest fury of the storm. The executive officer, second in command, steps forward, relieves the deck under the little-known article of Navy Regs, and gives the helmsman a new heading which enables the vessel to survive the typhoon.

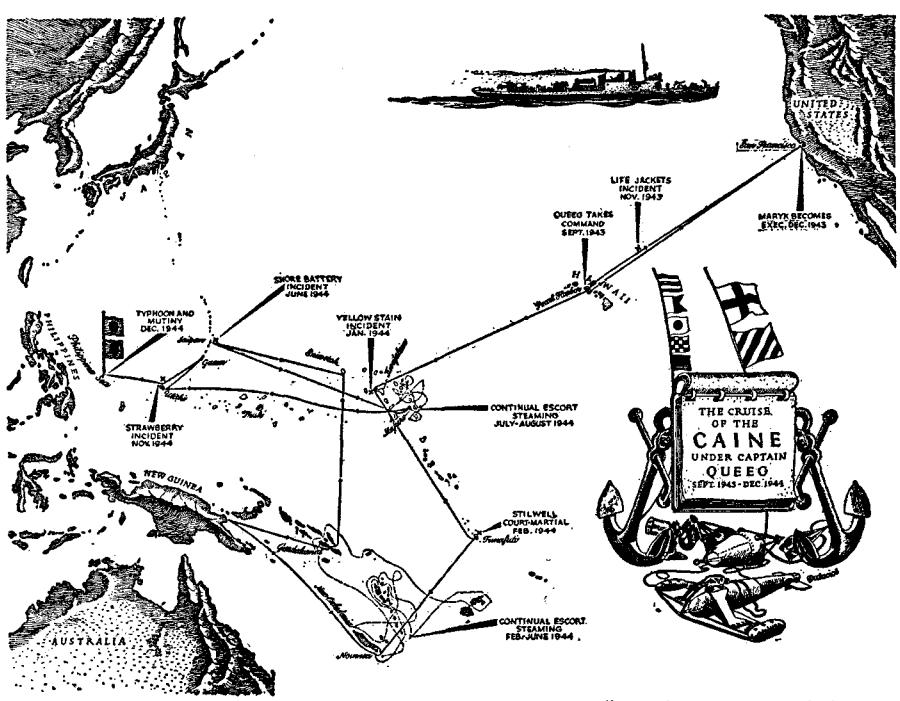
This is the situation which supplies the dramatic nucleus of Herman Wouk's third novel, "The Caine Mutiny." The preludes to this act, the storm itself and the court-martial examination which follows, fill two hundred and fifty of the most exciting pages you'll find in any novel of World War II. The description of the mighty gale is as thrilling as the best passages of Conrad, and the court-room scene is handled in the skilful, bare-bones tradition of the best legal climax of a Perry Mason adventure yarn.

"The Caine Mutiny," it must be noted, fills about five hundred pages. The other half of the book is concerned with the coming of age of Willie Keith, the ninety-day-wonder ensign who found his manhood in uniform. This portion of the book, including Willie's love affair with a night-club singer named May Wynn, seemed to me to be regrettably jejune.

Wouk afloat deals crisply and knowingly with the day-to-day life of officers and crew compelled by history and the Bureau of Personnel to serve under a neurotic despot. "The Caine Mutiny" is a vivid log of the important trivialities of shipboard life. It is only when the young hero steps ashore and begins working through the dreary detail of his liaison with the night-club singer that Mr. Wouk runs himself on the emotional shoals.

There is a curious dichotomy in "The Caine Mutiny." On the one hand Wouk writes characters, scenes, and details with professional skill and understanding. On the other hand there is an undigested immaturity which intrudes upon even his deepest impressions. For example, his portrait of Queeg, the testy incompetent who commands the *Caine*, is a masterful fictional rendering of the type of officer encountered by many who served afloat. Yet Wouk feels it necessary to supply a long speech in defense of this man, saying that it was Queeg and his like who played watchdog to the American military strength in peacetime, while the civilians were blissfully doping off. It is true, of course, that the professional sailors and soldiers were necessary to America's triumph by arms, but I do not see that this could ever be made a justification for cruelty, stupidity, and downright insanity in the officer class.

As a novel of how the ninety-day-wonder found his manhood and his girl "The Caine Mutiny" misses by a long sea mile. But as a modern sea adventure it is absolutely first-rank reading.


UNITED STATES
LIFE JACKETS INCIDENT NOV. 1943
QUEEG TAKES COMMAND SEPT. 1943
MARYK BECOMES EXEC. DEC. 1943
HAWAII
SHORE BATTERY INCIDENT JUNE 1944
TYPHOON AND MUTINY DEC. 1944
YELLOW STAIN INCIDENT JAN. 1944
PHILIPPINES
CAROLINES
STRAWBERRY INCIDENT NOV. 1944
CONTINUAL ESCORT STEAMING JULY-AUGUST 1944
NEW GUINEA
STILLWELL COURT-MARTIAL FEB. 1944
AUSTRALIA
CONTINUAL ESCORT STEAMING FEB.-JUNE 1944
THE CRUISE OF THE CAINE UNDER CAPTAIN QUEEG SEPT. 1943 - DEC. 1944

—From the end papers of the book.

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A Boy Is Risen

THE MORNING WATCH. By James Agee. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 120 pp. $2.25.

By Oliver La Farge

HERE is a successful and satisfying *tour de force*. Mr. Agee tells of some three hours in the life of a boy in early adolescence, at a Catholic boarding school on the morning of Good Friday. This could have been a sketch or an essay in sentimental religiosity or mere trivia, but it is none of these things. It is a well-balanced, exciting study of a human being at the beginning of the long process of discovering himself.

Richard, the main character, with two companions of his own age, Hobe and Jimmy—boys of a somewhat coarser fibre—has the privilege of keeping watch before the altar in the period beginning at four in the morning. To this he goes profoundly imbued with the sense of Our Lord's yearly-repeated agony, death, and eventual resurrection.

A long first section of the book is an internal monologue with necessary interwoven description, advantageously modified from the Joycean technique, carrying through Richard's awakening and his vigil. For a moment before the altar the narrative tends toward stickiness; partly, I think, because the reader is unprepared for so much intensity within so little action. Once over that hump the reader's absorption steadily increases.

The study of the boy is neither romantic, sentimental, nor cynical. It is realistic in the best sense, an exposition of credible thoughts and feelings in an adolescent under the influence of intense devotion through which constantly cut a boy's normal preoccupations and interests. There is a fascinating passage in which Richard works himself into a vicious circle; sincere contrition for wrong thinking brings a sense of relief from which springs a sense which he takes to be the sin of pride—hence his contrition is undone and he must start over again, only to end in the same dilemma. He finally gets out of this problem through his own healthy inability to remain concentrated on a single line of thought for long.

After the exaltation of their vigil the three boys play hooky. One of Mr. Agee's notable accomplishments is in making the reader feel that this decision is made in accordance with an intuitive logic, that it is reasonable and inevitable. In the course of their brief escapade a series of minor events occur which are magnified and seen with a new vividness because of Richard's emotional condition. He has learned something, as yet half grasped, of importance concerning himself and has strengthened his capacity for relations with others.

It does not sound like much, but there is a lot here. The reader is left with catharsis and a memory of first-class writing. I repeat, this is a *tour de force*—and a sound work of art.

Oliver La Farge's novels include "Laughing Boy," which won a Pulitzer Prize, and "All the Young Men."

The Dismal Month

By Melville Cane

STRUGGLING to shake off
The clutch of sleep,
To strike off
Winter's irons,
Spring, imprisoned maid,
Stirs, arises,
Bedraggled, disheveled,
Dead leaves sticking to her hair.

March is the dismal month of her delivery.

Cautiously,
In gown of shabby green
She picks her way unsteadily
Under lowering skies,
Over ruts still frozen,
Through dregs of snow.

But, as the sun
Ever so faintly
Nudges through a bank of slate,
She brightens with its shine.

Now,
Less wearily,
Less warily,
She quickens
Over the hill,
Across the meadow,
Down twinkling brooks,
Hair flying,
Dead leaves blowing.

Soon—
Such is her art of magic and surprise—
You will awake one morning
And behold!
Pure gold!
A rush of confident crocuses
Before your eyes.

A Fête Accompli

FESTIVAL. By J. B. Priestley. New York: Harper & Bros. 607 pp. $3.95.

By Basil Davenport

WHEN I was in the Army we had reason to be grateful to many volunteer entertainers, some of whom made up in warmth and spontaneity what was lacking in professional polish. I remember in particular one young juggler, who reached the climax of his act by riding a unicycle while keeping a number of Indian clubs in the air; after a few seconds of this he called out with engaging candor, "Better applaud now; I don't keep this up very long."

It is the amazing thing about that veteran entertainer Mr. Priestley that he can keep it up, almost without end and apparently without effort. In this book his unicycle is the Festival of Britain in Farbridge, a provincial town that has voted down the idea of having a local festival. Chief among his glittering Indian clubs are Laura, a girl who loses her job in the first chapter; Theodore, a shy young man from the Colonies with money but as yet no friends; and Commodore Horace Tribe, one of those lovable old rogues living by their wits, who realizes that if Farbridge can be persuaded to reverse its decision and have a festival, with him as its director, there will be a good deal of money passing through his hands.

In the manner of Mr. Priestley's "Good Companions," whose success this is sure to duplicate, each member of this trihominate has a chapter devoted to him at the beginning; then they meet at a café table and pool their fortunes. These are the chief objects that are kept spinning; but there are a number of others—the mysterious lady to whom the Commodore is attracted, who disappears and reappears and tells a different story of her past every time, the private inquiry agent who turns out to be a god from the machine, a self-made man with a manner of brass and a heart of gold, and innumerable minor figures all more or less caricatured—the local magnates who must be won over, the artists who take part in the festival.

It is all light fiction but light fiction on a heroic scale. It is no small feat to make a soufflé the size of a wedding cake and keep it from collapsing. Mr. Priestley does it by varying his stories and his moods. He knows the trick, which Scott learned from Ariosto and applied in "Ivanhoe," of keeping a number of stories intersecting and of varying the mood. Whenever there is a possibility that

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we might become tired of the difficulties of organizing a festival against local opposition Theodore and Laura fall in love or it looks as though the Commodore's past was going to catch up with him or something happens in a triangle of other people whom I haven't even mentioned or Theodore and Laura fall out or the mysterious lady sends Theodore to burgle a house. Sentiment follows farce, romance alternates with caricature. Where you have had enough of the average light novel by the end of its three hundred pages, here you read the whole six hundred and would be glad of more. Scale counts, as Aristotle says: a good big work of art can always lick a good little work of art. This is to the average light novel as the epic to the epigram.

In the face of so much sheer entertainment it makes little difference that the characters are stock figures or that the misunderstanding between the lovers is pretty silly even for a light novel. And in a book generally so gay and genial there is an occasional note almost of spitefulness that strikes false. Mr. Priestley himself seems to feel that he has indulged his characters once too often in the good old wish-fulfillment fantasy of talking back to the boss or the traffic cop, for after the last scene in which somebody tells a bigwig what he thinks of him another character protests. And if for the author of the modern verse play Mr. Priestley has in mind the man I think he has his parody is unfair and his criterion is inept.

But it is ungenerous to be anything but grateful to a book which gives so much sheer pleasure in its comedy, its sentiment, and above all in those passages where Mr. Priestley sets out to capture the absolute, ancient enchantment of entertainment. In those passages, when he is describing the theatre, fireworks, a festival the magic is indeed caught; the unicycle becomes a unicorn.

A Husband, a Wife, and a

CONJUGAL LOVE. By Alberto Moravia. Translated by Angus Davidson. New York: Farrar, Straus & Young. 183 *pp.* $2.50.

By David Davidson

IN HIS third book to be published in America the Italian novelist Alberto Moravia makes use of a tricky literary device which calls to mind the famed Quaker Oats trademark: a mother holding up temptingly before her child a box of Quaker Oats upon which is imprinted a mother holding up temptingly before her child a box of Quaker Oats upon which. . . . And so forth until the eye fails. In short, "Conjugal Love" is a novel about a novelist writing a novel under a title none other than—"Conjugal Love."

The analogy ends in the fact that Signor Moravia, as demonstrated by his previous books, "The Woman of Rome" and "Two Adolescents," and by most of the present work as well, is a writer of outstanding skill, perception, and distinction, whereas his fictitious counterpart, Silvio Baldeschi, is presented as a poor, uncreative, sterile dilettante. Not until a rather horrifying and spectacular experience at the very end of Signor Moravia's novel is Signor Baldeschi so awakened finally as to see life with keen eyes and be enabled presumably to go on and produce a novel as good as this one.

Whatever satisfactions this convoluted device may have given Moravia personally it is the novel's least notable aspect. Where "Conjugal Love" shines and where it most fascinates is in its Proust-like ability at times to evoke profound significances from seemingly trivial happenings in the relation of a man and his wife.

Baldeschi's wife, Leda, was a beautiful but not overly cultivated with a calm border g on a not to his displeasure. The one signal perhaps was the odd she sometimes struck in which appeared to be "thrusting away some imaginary danger and at the same time indicating . . . that the danger of assault was not unwelcome." Entirely absorbed in the chef d'oeuvre which would lift him from mediocrity, Baldeschi basked in Leda's "good will," though sensing it to be a little patronizing. Matters came to a head over Baldeschi's barber, who Leda complained had pressed against her insolently while dressing her hair. But Baldeschi, for the moment totally occupied with writing about their marriage as he fancied it to be, laughed the matter off as an accident.

It was weeks later after giving himself up as a novelist and returning full force as a husband that he began to see the deeper implications of the incident. By then he was reaping the whirlwind, a failure as husband and novelist both. In Leda stood revealed hellish new aspects he could never have imagined. And some gentler ones, too.

The climax of the story and Baldeschi's oddly masochistic acceptance of it are not likely to strike every reader as plausible, including this one. But along the way and in the closing pages Moravia offers rich and subtle fare. His newest work, despite its almost novelette shortness, leaves far more sticking to the ribs than many a seven hundred-page "giant" of recent memory. The translation by Angus Davidson, incidentally, reads smoothly and naturally enough to have been an original.

David Davidson is the author of "The Hour of Truth," "In Another Country," and other novels.

—*Walker Evans.*

James Agee, Alberto Moravia, J. B. Priestley—"scale counts."

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... Florence

SO WIDE. By Sinclair Lewis. York: Random House. 250 pp.

By Howard Mumford Jones

SINCLAIR LEWIS'S posthumous novel, "World So Wide" repeats familar formulae. A Western architect, Hayden Chart, wrecks his automobile and kills his wife and then, once out of the hospital, goes to Europe to recover balance. He lingers in Florence, because he thinks some knowledge of the past will steady him. Historical information is principally available in Olivia Lomond, a professor on leave, with whom he falls in love. However, there is also an American colony (including Sam Dodsworth), mostly fraudulent, and into this group the novelist thrusts a bumptious man from the movie world named Lundsgard, who flutters hearts, including Olivia's. Lundsgard is exposed by Hayden's home-town girl-friend, Roxanna, brought by the novelist to Italy for this purpose, and the story ends—but not before there has been an epidemic of exposures, after which Roxanna and Hayden are married.

The book reaffirms familiar values. There may be, Lewis implies, something in old-world culture, and there is among simple people an old-world integrity; but this is not for or among Americans, who must imitate Antaeus and continually renew contact with their soil. Against the fraud or pathos of exiled Americans Lewis sets the slangy wholesomeness of Roxanna, whom we are supposed to regard as the proper mate for Hayden Chart. Two wholesome Americans marry, leaving behind them the hybrid and the hyphenate, among whom is Olivia Lomond. But Olivia Lomond does not really belong in this bracket. I think the true defect of the book is that Lewis avoided his real story, which is the problem of Olivia; but she proved too complex for his simpler techniques.

"World So Wide" comes in three layers. The opening narrative is that rapid action which Lewis always managed admirably. The middle portion, in which Hayden discovers Florence and awakens Olivia to life, is told seriously, if sentimentally. The last is rip-roaring farce-melodrama. The characters alter their psychology at the end of chapters and are now to be taken seriously as studies and now to be regarded with humorous contempt. The point of view wavers in the novel, and the dialogue vibrates between the metallic wise-cracking Lewis regards as Western speech and the literary idiom of Olivia.

As an international novel "World So Wide" cannot of course be usefully compared with Henry James. But it is illuminating to think of Howells's neglected small masterpiece, "A Foregone Conclusion," in which Howells, fresh from Venice, set himself the task of a love story in that city, as Lewis set himself the task of a love story in Florence. But with how much less clatter and confusion Howells goes about it. How subtle his feeling for the life, the atmosphere, the antiquity, the fraud, and the charm of Venice. How imperceptibly he leads the reader to understand the impossibility of fusing two cultures. His study possesses tone and unity, his characters all have real depth and perspective, and yet neither they nor Howells lack wit; and if in the end Howells, like Lewis, finds for an American marriage, it is seriously and not as energetic farce.

I think Sinclair Lewis was ridden, so to speak, by his own reputation, by his conception of himself as a preacher in comic prose. Therefore, the admirable passages in "World So Wide," the flashes here and there of insight and of sympathy are drowned in the noisy prose elsewhere in the book. A theme which required penetration is reduced to the broad stroke, the comic exposure, burlesque, and knockabout. The story does not rise to the plane of the great Lewis novels but must nestle contentedly under their shadow.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT NO. 406

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 406 will be found in the next issue.

Q PRSSNMN NTLPQKBRO

BH RON RC KEN CNA

KEBOMH Q FNGHRO BH

ABSSBOM KR FQX CRG

QOT ORK MNK.

—A. S. DGXQO.

Answer to Crypt No. 405

If you would lose a troublesome visitor, lend him money.

B. Franklin.

Le Grand Cannon, Jr.—"frost scrolls."

The Will of God

COME HOME AT EVEN. By Le Grand Cannon, Jr. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 283 pp. $3.

By Shirley Barker

THIS is a beautiful book—beautiful as perfectly wrought ironwork or frost scrolls on the windowpane—and about as warm. Le Grand Cannon, as he proved in his earlier novel "Look to the Mountain," can achieve exactly the literary effects he wants, and perhaps that is all that we should ask of an artist—that he do for us what he sets out to do.

The story is briefly this: Robert Cargill, a poor man and a carpenter, discouraged in England as the 1630's come in, crosses the sea to a shadowy farming town that is labeled Salem, but might as well be Plymouth, or Wethersfield, or Portsmouth in Piscataqua. He believes he is removing there at the will of God, and with him go Ellen, his dearly loved wife, stubborn in her invalidism, and the bound-boy Willie, of no use to God, or man, or himself but helpful to the plot of the book. The conflict comes when Robert must choose between staying here where God has told him he belongs but where his wife will most surely die and returning to England, thereby losing his soul and saving her body. Roger Williams has a hand in the choice, and eventually a fading ray of mortal happiness shines across the last pages—but not a very vivid or convincing one.

Life in Puritan New England was certainly gray and brown and russet, snow-swept and cold; a matter of grubbing roots, chopping down oak trees, and wrestling with the Devil, and it cannot be honestly pictured in

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any other way. But there was scarlet in the vision, too: not only the famous letter, the sly sinning, and hypocrisy but the colors of intensity and passion and a kind of indigenous life that started up when the first boatload of English folk stepped ashore there, a life like nothing else that ever was in this world or will be again. Mr. Cannon has deliberately chosen to leave out this detailed localism, to tell his story in almost timeless terms. Perhaps for this reason, his English scenes are more successful. We expect timelessness of England. When he writes of rural tragedy there, the tragedies and violences of small men, touching in their very smallness and impotence, we remember A. E. Housman and Thomas Hardy—artists, again, who had their home shires as he does not. His Lincoln could as well be Chesire or Devon or Warwick.

But it is entirely possible that this very characteristic may make "Come Home at Even" a better historical novel than anyone else now writing in America is capable of giving us. There are no trappings of costume and pewterware to decorate it, no scenes of sexual passion to stimulate the reader; only the quiet story of a man's soul, striving, weakening, falling, making terms with itself, and somehow keeping on. It is pitched a little too low, colored a little too dun and drab for this reviewer—who remembers at the same time, uneasily, that swine rarely recognize pearls.

Shirley Barker is the author of "Rivers Parting" and "Peace, My Daughters," novels of early New England life.

Fiction Notes

RIDE HOME TOMORROW. By Evan John. Putnam. $3.50. The author, an English Shakespearean actor and a playwright, here essays a new role, that of historical novelist. He has chosen for his theme a difficult period, one rarely written about with knowledge, of which Mr. John appears to have a vast fund. Fortunately for the reader, he integrates his scholarship with his fiction not without skill, and he writes well and now and again with distinction.

Written in the first person by the hero looking back at time, this is the story of several campaigns carried on by the Crusaders against Saladin and his Saracens. The action covers considerable space. The hero, Andrew, later knighted for his services to Christendom, is forever taking journeys. Among the places of his itin-

(*Continued on page* 34)

Music. *On March 25 Arturo Toscanini celebrated his eighty-fourth birthday. It is the first time in sixty-five years that the conductor has passed this anniversary out of harness. Music lovers the world over are wishing him a speedy recovery from the knee ailment that forced his temporary retirement. While awaiting Toscanini's return we can obtain vicarious enjoyment from the new biography by Howard Taubman reviewed below—the fourth book about Maestro Toscanini to be published in America. It is an easy transition from the Italian conductor to Giacomo Puccini, for the careers of both were intertwined for three decades. George R. Marek's biography of Puccini, despite some shortcomings, fills a gap in musical bibliography. For Wanda Landowska's feature review of "François Couperin and the French Classical Tradition"* *turn to page 48.*

Eighty-four—and Still Growing

THE MAESTRO. By Howard Taubman. New York: Simon & Schuster. 342 *pp.* $5.

By Erich Leinsdorf

IN HIS biography of Arturo Toscanini the music editor of *The New York Times*, Howard Taubman, has done an admirable piece of work, not only in writing about the protagonist of the story but, in a wider sense, contributing a fascinating chronicle of a good portion of our time's musical history. We have here a book which is alive, accurate, and objective. Mr. Taubman has more than justified the sometimes delicate undertaking of writing the biography of a man still alive, many of whose contemporaries are still at work, and has solved the difficulty of relating incidents that involve people still active without damaging feelings or reputations.

Within the area that I could check from personal experience there is not a single error in factual reporting, nor has anything of importance been omitted. Taubman has been shrewd and discerning in eliminating hoary anecdotes and keeping to proven facts, a quality well in evidence when the story turns to the political fights that Toscanini had with Mussolini and Hitler. The author's brief comments on the kind of public that attended prewar European festivals, his description of the native townspeople standing in the street and gaping at the dressy international set go beyond the usual simplicity of narrating an artist's career and illuminate many of our era's troubles.

Toscanini's life and career are laid before the reader in detail and in simple language. At no point does the author stroll away from the story to dwell on questionable conclusions and interpretations. He has followed in his book Toscanini's own method of work: know the utmost about your subject; study, study, and study; then study some more and do your task clearly, simply, and without unnecessary flourishes or mannerisms. By this seemingly simple method (which is possible only for a self-effacing man) the fascinating and sometimes hard-to-understand personal character of the maestro has come to life vividly and accurately. No attempt has been made to conceal inconsistency or to reinterpret some change of mind into a natural and logical sequence. Not once does the temptation to psychoanalyze his subject creep into Taubman's pages. Episodes involving others are described in such a manner that nothing is concealed except the identity of the person who came out second best.

The one principal omission in the book is, to my mind, unavoidable. No attempt has been made to convey to the reader anything about Toscanini's performances and interpretations. Actually, there is no way of translating a musical performance into words that would have meaning to readers distant in time and space. Here is one of the profoundest reasons why performing musicians, like actors, depend upon and live by the approval of their contemporaries. I question even whether the recordings that the maestro has made can fill that void. Mr. Taubman assumes that these records will do the job of carrying Toscanini's interpretations to posterity, but a recording is merely a

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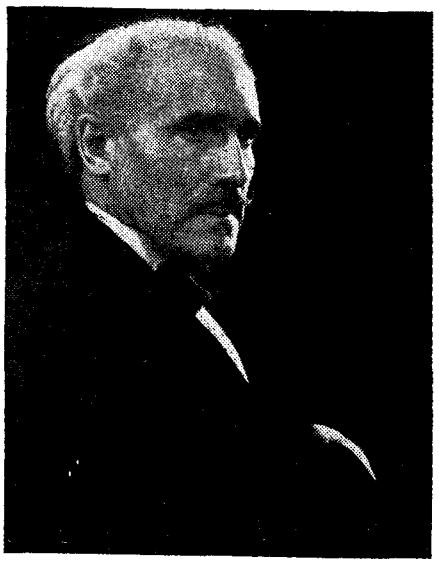
memento of one performance and is conditioned by many factors other than the mind of the guiding man.

I remember a significant conversation I had with Toscanini in the fall of 1936. He had conducted four "Fidelio" performances during August in Salzburg and two more, with the same cast and orchestra, in September of that year in Vienna. One day shortly after the last of these performances I took my courage in my hands and asked him if I had been correct in my observation that the entire score of "Fidelio" had been played slightly slower in the Vienna Opera House than in the Salzburg Festival Theatre. He thought a long time; then without definitely answering "Yes" or "No" he conceded that it could be so, inasmuch as the theatre in Salzburg had very "dead" acoustics while the Vienna Opera House was most brilliant and that it is natural to be slightly faster in the deader halls since they give back no reverberation.

In this book Taubman has exploded the myth that Toscanini sticks to the letter of the score; this would be pedantic and the exact opposite of Toscanini. He has done away with the stupid misconception that Toscanini is metronomic; his heart and his pulse have the most superlative rhythm but never the cold equanimity of a metronome. The book further destroys the legend of many rehearsals for rehearsing's sake; the maestro rehearses as much as is necessary, and sometimes that is quite a lot and at other times



—NBC.

Arturo Toscanini—". . . do your task clearly, simply."

very little. Mr. Taubman admires Toscanini; otherwise he would not have worked for many years to assemble the material for this biography. But he does not gush. The result is a book that shows a man, a great artist, in his lifelong struggle with an elusive art, winning the highest honors and the greatest fame, never content with himself and therefore still growing at the age of eighty-four.

Erich Leinsdorf, conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, was Toscanini's assistant in Salzburg and Vienna from 1934 *to* 1937.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

ABOUT WHICH WAR WERE THESE WRITTEN?

Olive Weaver Ridenour, of Arcanum, Ohio, contributes this week's quiz. Allowing five points for each correct answer, a score of sixty is par, seventy is very good, and eighty or better is excellent. Answers on page 29.

1. The Charge of the Light Brigade.....by Alfred Tennyson
2. Paul Revere's Ride.....by Henry W. Longfellow
3. A Farewell to Arms.....by Ernest Hemingway
4. The Star-Spangled Banner.....by Francis Scott Key
5. The Battle Hymn of the Republic.....by Julia Ward Howe
6. For Whom the Bell Tolls.....by Ernest Hemingway
7. Sheridan's Ride.....by Thomas Buchanan Read
8. Lexington.....by Oliver Wendell Holmes
9. The Spy.....by James Fenimore Cooper
10. Barbara Frietchie.....by John Greenleaf Whittier
11. Arch of Triumph.....by Erich Maria Remarque
12. Gone with the Wind.....by Margaret Mitchell
13. War and Peace.....by Leo Tolstoy
14. Maryland! My Maryland!.....by James R. Randall
15. Reprisal.....by Ethel Vance
16. All Quiet on the Western Front.....by Erich Maria Remarque
17. The Murder of Lidice.....by Edna St. Vincent Millay
18. The Red Badge of Courage.....by Stephen Crane
19. The Biglow Papers.....by James Russell Lowell
20. The Battle of the Kegs.....by Francis Hopkinson

Style Is the Man

SCHUBERT: A Musical Portrait. By Alfred Einstein. Translated by David Ascoli. New York: Oxford University Press. 343 *pp.* $5.50.

By Gerald Abraham

THIS is a "must" book for everyone who reads about music. It will interest and instruct both the musicologist—although it is not written for him—and the ordinary intelligent concert-going, radio-listening, record-collecting music lover—who should not find it beyond him. For Alfred Einstein has one great advantage over most eminent musical scholars: he has also been a newspaper critic and has therefore had to learn to make himself easily and generally comprehensible. And as he tells us in his foreword, his book is "written for readers who know and love their Schubert and who wish to understand him better and to know more about him."

Professor Einstein calls his book "a musical portrait." That is precisely what it is, although as the portrait is conceived in terms of time and development "a musical biography" would have been still more accurate. Yet that subtitle would have conveyed a wrong impression on the dust jacket unless the publisher had italicized "musical." This is not just one more life-and-works of Schubert; it is something far more fascinating—a life *in* the works. Professor Einstein is not very interested in the outward life of Schubert the man; he will disappoint the reader who wants one more picturesque account of the tubby, bespectacled little man at the *Heurigen* or the café table, the hedonist in lilac time. His subject is the inward life of Schubert the composer, the evolution of his musical style, the maturing of the musical being who fulfilled himself in that style.

So he abandons the customary classification of works according to category and adopts a year-by-year grouping that enables him to show not only the general trends of Schubert's musical thinking but the subtler biases and preoccupations, not only to tell us why Schubert was led to set Scott and Shakespeare just when he did (about 1825) but to show how the song-setting of Friedrich Schlegel's "Fülle der Liebe" is "an interpretation or an explanation of the Andante from the D major 'Gastein' Sonata" written in the same month, how the Andantino of the A major piano sonata of 1828 "has a direct connection with a song—'Pilgerweise,'" and how the finale of the same sonata is "obviously" related to the song "Im Früh-

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ling." Not that one can always agree with the author's specific cases; I do not agree that the last instance is at all "obvious," and I am surprised that Professor Einstein has omitted to mention the very much more obvious relationship of that finale to the slow movement of the A minor sonata of 1817. But the general outline is most finely drawn. This is a masterly piece of work.

However, Schubert is shown not exclusively, though essentially, as a musician, nor is he shown in isolation. Dr. Einstein sets the stage with several chapters of normal biography on Schubert's youth and he drops in the facts of Schubert's day-by-day outward life here and there. He places his central figure in relation to his friends, poets, fellow composers, digresses in interludes on Schubert's harmony or his syphilis, his attitude to death or his relationships with publishers, even on the political atmosphere of Vienna. (He believes Schubert not to have been such a political innocent as is commonly assumed, and he may be right; in Metternich's Vienna one had to be careful.) He is, of course, the last person to be *narrowly* musical; the breadth of his general culture equals the depth of his musical insight.

The translator, too, deserves more than a word of praise; David Ascoli has done a first-rate job.

Gerald Abraham, professor of music at the University of Liverpool, is editor of "The Music of Schubert" and author of several books on nineteenth-century music.

—Caricatures of Puccini by Enrico Caruso.

The Power to Fascinate

PUCCINI: A Biography. By George R. Marek. New York: Simon & Schuster. 412 pp. $5.

By Herbert Weinstock

CHOOSING to attempt a biography of Giacomo Puccini any writer consciously decides to face a peculiar set of problems. This man, who rose from poverty to great wealth by composing nine full-length operas and three one-acters over a period of forty-one years, was ambigious both in his character and in his music. Except for his musical gift, he did not have a very interesting mind or outlook. He was an individual whom it is difficult to admire, and some of his public dealings were shabby, notably those with Leoncavallo and with Alberto Franchetti. He lived with a beautiful, jealous, and emotionally unstable woman who adored him enough to face constant censure for having left her legal husband—and Puccini gave her enough reasons for turning dangerously psychopathic. Although one book about him was entitled "Puccini Among Friends," he was not a good friend. Almost the only man with whom he maintained amicable relations over a considerable period of years was his strong-minded publisher, Tito Ricordi.

Three operas that Puccini composed between 1894 and 1903—"La Bohème," "Tosca," and "Madama Butterfly"—have remained popular necessities of the repertoire for decades. There is still the possibility that "Manon Lescaut" and "Turandot" may join them in public esteem. Yet even the friendliest of critics must speak of them with a mixture of somewhat unwilling admiration and regret over their palpable weaknesses. Those weaknesses include a soft and intermittently embarrassing sentimentality and a tendency to use easily identified melodic mannerisms and harmonic textures over and over. In them the female characters are often given individual life, but the men, almost without exception, are less well realized in the music than in the librettos.

Puccini was not a great man; few would call him a great composer. He will not serve as a model for anything but worldly success and even that eluded him during the last twenty years of his life, or after "Madama Butterfly." And *yet* (a word that echoes through all discussion of Puccini), and yet—both his biography and his music have power to fascinate. George R. Marek, avoiding musical analysis most of the way and technical exegesis always, has not attempted to discover the secrets of Puccini's musical fascination. It can be done: in some scattered essays and in an English book called "Of Men and Music" (not the American book of that title by Deems Taylor) Mosco Carner has done it in part. There is real illumination in Mr. Carner's remarks about Puccini's "tired" melodies and about the tendency that those melodies have to fall more than they rise.

The absence of musical criticism might be justified in a book re-creating a man and period long dead and could certainly be justified in one contributing important new materials to the story of reinterpreting those materials in bright new light. But Puccini has been dead only a little more than twenty-six years, and Mr. Marek's book supplies neither decisive new data nor convincing new interpretation. The total effect of his biography is therefore patched, blurred, and at last vague. The book lacks impact.

I suspect that the trouble with this amiable and often charming book is that insufficient hard work went into both its general plan and its line-by-line writing. On page after page it cries out for editing, rearrangement, and correction. Its patchiness and lack of flow could have been prevented. And what, for example, are "unvegetated mountains"? What, in any language, is a "professoire"? Can operas be said to "rank among the top"—not the top anythings, but just "the top"? And what is the meaning of "mucid"?

These are a few of the hundreds of questions of detail raised by Mr. Marek's text. They are perhaps small matters, but just large enough to spoil my pleasure in any book. And they symbolize the general failure of de-

(*Continued on page* 33)

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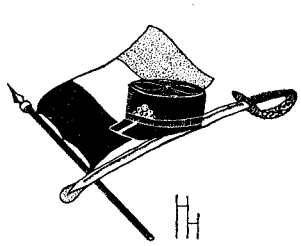
Visitor from Paris

IT IS TIME for Americans who have been reading with dismay such books as Arthur Koestler's "The Age of Longing" and Jean-Paul Sartre's "Troubled Sleep" to take another look at France. Whether Koestler is right or wrong in concluding that the country is paralyzed by fear of another war and that while French intellectuals cannot lift the cultural level of the people they have the power to corrode and destroy its will to resist, there is nevertheless a brighter side to the picture. It is symbolized by the arrival of the President of France, Vincent Auriol, in this country on March 28. Though he will be hampered by the ruling that all the Ministers of his Government have to initial the text of any address he might make, so that it may be difficult for him to speak to the American people directly, there may be some merit in this return to the older diplomacy of secrecy and silence at the top level at a time when the voices of the heads of nations are often at war with each other. President Auriol in leaving Paris, which still remains "the city of light" and the cultural heart of the world, enters a country which is now the center of Western power and wealth, a country which some Frenchmen believe has so little culture that they have labeled it in disgust "the Coca-Cola Civilization."



We have been asking Western Europe and especially France to accept American leadership in the long conflict with Russia, and it should not astonish any reasonable American to discover that this has been met with obdurate hostility. The French are the most rational people on earth, and their fears that they will be slaughtered in still another world war tempts them to accept the notion that they would prefer to remain alive and to be ruled by Communists than to die on a thousand battefields. This natural reaction leads them to magnify the worst aspects of American life and to dismiss the more beneficent aims of our free-enterprise society. In fact, their conception of American capitalism is on a par with our own sixty years ago when the unfettered and untaxed millionaire was pictured as an obese tyrant in a plug hat, carrying bags of gold in each hand. They have no idea that our society now is that mixture of modified Socialism and capitalism which has not only made the United States the most productive and prosperous country on earth but has also forced us to a leadership which we dislike as intensely as they fear it. It would appear that they do not wish to see us in any other light than the one their intellectuals have presented, the bellicose barbarian who is determined to force on them the American way of life.

Nevertheless, there was a power vacuum in Western Europe too obvious to disregard, and it had to be filled by an untouched and revitalized America — or by Communist Europe. On the horns of this dilemma all thinking people in Europe who were not confessed Communists have been uneasily perched. The risk that President Auriol's people run of having their culture and their way of life destroyed by American mass production already seems less significant than the danger of Communist conquest, which would bring even more disastrous changes to French culture, including the loss of free speech and free will and the death or exile of their leaders in every field of activity.

About three months ago when *The Saturday Review* published an issue entitled "America and the Mind of Europe" the question of the French acceptance of American leadership was in doubt and the Schuman plan for the economic integration of Western Europe appeared to be a quite hopelessly utopian program. Today General Eisenhower is in Paris as the supreme commander of the reviving forces of the Atlantic Pact Nations.

Perhaps some of that paralyzing fear of which Arthur Koestler writes may soon be lifted from the minds of Frenchmen when they realize that the die has been cast and that strength and unity are slowly erasing the nightmare conceptions of the Communist conquest of Europe. The Schuman Plan has been initialed by all the Western powers with the exception of England that were within its province. The Foreign Ministers of the Four Powers are meeting in Paris in the pink marble Palais Rose arguing with Mr. Gromyko as to whether they should in the near future argue, like a high-school debating society, "Is the West Arming Germany to Attack Russia?" versus "Is Russian Armament the Cause of World Tension?"

But they are at least sitting in Paris, which is the best place to sit in the world, not far from Eisenhower's headquarters and also not far from the cafes of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, where the existentialist young men sit around little tables, wagging their opulent or scrawny beards and mourning about the necessity for despair as if it was a philosophy of the utmost importance to the future. Mr. Auriol may take some comfort from all of this activity as a sign that Paris is still the political and cultural center of Europe, and he might further reflect that Americans will rid themselves of their enforced leadership in military and economic affairs as soon as possible — and with the greatest pleasure in the world. —H. S.

Tell It to Arun

The following report from India was received at The Saturday Review *more than a month ago but was withheld from publication at that time because of what seemed to be a certainty that the Wheat-for-India bill would be passed by Congress within a matter of days. It now appears that such optimism was unfortunately not justified, and we herewith publish Norman Cousins's dispatch as originally received.*

New Delhi.

ONCE you have seen the look of hunger on the face of a man it is difficult to put it out of your mind. I have seen the look of hunger on the faces of thousands of men, and I know I shall never forget it.

I first saw the hungry in a jail on the island of Ceylon. They were illegal immigrants fleeing the famine in the South of India, and the Government of Ceylon was detaining them

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in a prison in Jaffna until arrangements could be worked out for their return to India. They had come by small boat, landing during the night on the North coast of Ceylon, where some of them had been picked up by the police. No one knew how many Indians had fled to Ceylon in this manner.

In the jail at Jaffna I spoke to a woman of fifty-five who looked closer to ninety. I doubt that she weighed eighty pounds. Her face was little more than a bare skull out of which small eyes glowed feverishly. She had come to Ceylon to join her married daughter, who had escaped successfully two months earlier. This much she was willing to tell, but she would not tell the police where her daughter might be found, even though it meant she herself would be returned to India alone.

I next saw the hungry in the South of India, where the suffering is most acute. I saw them against a background of parched and browned fields, with pale stubbles where rich rice paddies should have been. The reason for it was that the rains never came this year. They didn't come last year either or the year before that or the year before that.

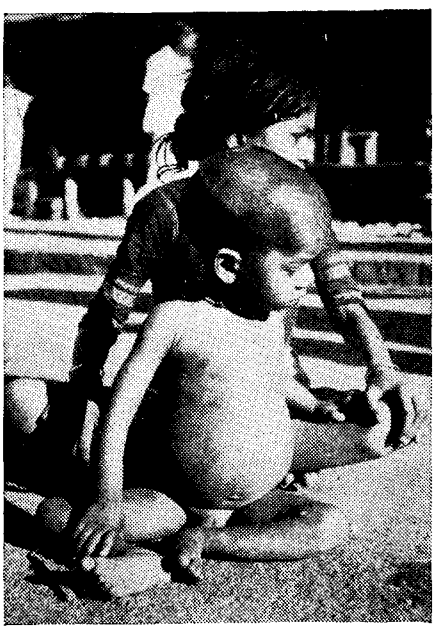
"Four years, no monsoon," one of the elders in a village forty miles from Madras told me. "The older people have thought hard but they do not remember when before the fields have been so dry. The wells are very low."

He looked up at the scudding clouds. "Clouds like this used to bring rain. Now they go out to sea and drop their rain where there is no need of it. The old people can eat little. If they are thin it is no great harm. Gandhi was thin. But the children are thin and they become sick quickly. Smallpox has killed many of them. Thirty had smallpox in this village. Sixteen died.

"We send men into the cities to work so they can buy rice to bring back to the village. But there is so little rice and the rations have been cut again, and what they bring back cannot fill the bowls of many persons. We eat what we can—bananas and some coconuts—but very many people here are starving."

I NEXT saw the faces of the hungry on the streets of Calcutta. Many of them were homeless. They had lost their homes during the partition of India when Pakistan was created. They were Hindus who feared the Muslims, and they had abandoned their homes in Pakistan and crossed over into India. In India there are perhaps eight or ten million such refugees—it might be millions more; no one knows exactly how many. Thousands of them came into Calcutta, the world's largest city, looking for food and homes. They slept in the street. Wherever you went at night, on the main thoroughfares or in the alleys or in the hallways, you could see the human forms huddled together against the cool night. During the day they waited in lines for Government food or they begged.

Near the luxurious Grand Hotel in Calcutta was a child of eight or nine, with not enough clothes to conceal the bloated, empty belly of hunger. He was looking in the streets for



—*European.*

". . . the bloated, empty belly of hunger."

scraps of food. Nearby was a young woman of about twenty, her body covered by the rags of what once must have been a handsome sari. A child of two was on her hip. The child was badly undernourished, and his head rested on his mother's shoulder. His face was empty and expressionless.

I also saw the hungry of Bangalore. They sat against the walls of buildings and waited.

Then I saw them in Delhi. There are more of the hungry and homeless in Delhi than in any other city in the world. As in Calcutta, many of them are refugees—maybe 500,000 or 600,000—and they have crowded into the city, setting up crude wood-and-straw shelters, most of them closet size. And every day the dead are carried out by men who are little more than half-alive themselves. I stood on the corner of a busy street in Delhi and watched the refugees as they passed. Out of thousands who passed by only two would be considered plump by American standards.

The Indians are reluctant to talk about themselves or about their hardships. I was able, however, to win over the confidence of the attendant assigned to my room. He told me about his six-year-old son, the one with tuberculosis. He said his son had been praying a great deal recently, much more than usual, and he had asked his son what he had been praying for. "My son was praying that he might die. He wanted to die and he wanted God to make him into a crow. I had told him about the crows that fly into the open windows of the hotel rooms and pick up food on the tables and then carry the food off. My son said he wanted to be a crow so he could fly wherever there was food and bring it back to our family."

Then the attendant, whose name was Arun, turned away from me and knelt down to fix the fire. "India has been hungry for many months," he said. "They are saying that America has known about this need and that America has not wished to send us food."

I replied that what he had been told was not true. What had happened was that we had been too slow in responding to India's need, and that was bad enough. Americans had to operate through their Government and often democratic government is slow in doing what has to be done promptly. I asked him to believe that millions of Americans were deeply concerned and were prodding our Government to action.

Then he mentioned the report he had read in the newspapers about the American Senators who wanted to punish India because India did not agree with the United States in the United Nations.

"It is true is it not, sir, that we may not get the food because we do not say what you wish us to say?"

I HAD to think a little while before replying, because I wasn't too sure that what he had feared might not turn out to be true. Should I have told him not to pay any attention to the stories in the press about the few members of our Congress who display so little conscience on vital matters concerning the human community? Should I have told him that it might take many days before the Wheat Bill might pass during which time he would have to watch his youngsters continue to eat out of partially filled bowls?

Finally, I told him that there was no real answer to his question, except to say that we would do our best, our very best, and that the American people would be angry if any at-

(*Continued on page* 35)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rose-Colored Japan?

SIR: As I have learned to respect Norman Cousins's keen sense of observation and basic integrity it was quite a shock to read his editorial "A Tough One for History" [*SRL* Mar. 3]. He gave the impression of having taken too fast a taxi ride through Japan—like the American who is said to have done the Louvre in forty minutes.

A rapid jaunt down the Ginza might give one the feeling of prosperity because of the crowds of people and ample merchandise. But try walking down a side street. Mr. Cousins may have seen food piled high, but did he consider the prices? Last summer I recall seeing beautiful watermelons on display at eighty cents each. When you are lucky to make a dollar a day how much fruit can you buy? Of course, Mr. Cousins could see new refrigerators and delicate lace lingerie, but has he ever been inside a factory and seen women straining over the intricate lacework of a blouse, putting in twenty-eight hours of work on a single item that sells for two dollars?

Japan's basic problem is too many people, too little land. In 1947 her population was estimated at 76,000,000. Now she has more than 83,000,000 —and she continues to increase at the rate of one and a half million a year. Since Japan does not produce enough food to feed these people she must import, and to import she must sell her finished products to other countries. But today with the overseas sources of supply no longer available she cannot import or export satisfactorily. Silk, her most reliable foreign-trade item, has been replaced by synthetic fibers in the world market.

Perhaps this is sufficient to emphasize the point that when one speaks of Japan's "recovery" and "prosperity" one must be sure to describe a frame of reference. One must also avoid generalizing from random details that belie fundamental conditions. The apparent "prosperity" that Norman Cousins records is at best a temporary one artifically maintained by American contributions.

If Mr. Cousins's emphasis had been placed on Japan's recovery of morale I would be more inclined to agree with him. To see these people scraping out a bare existence and doing it with boundless energy and unfailing good humor is to learn a lesson about the resources of the human spirit.

THEODORE HATLEN.

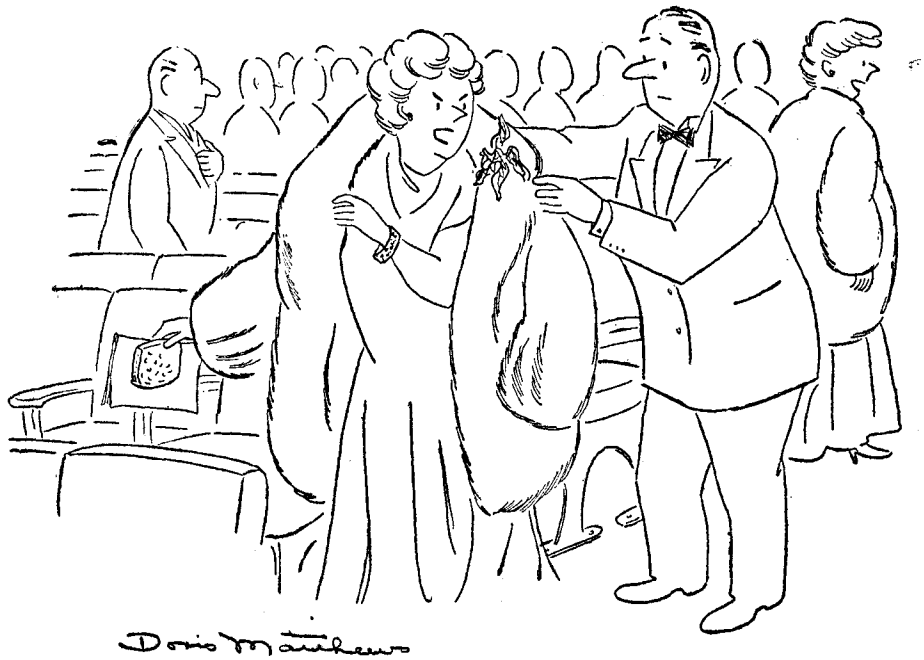
Santa Barbara, Calif.

SIR: Norman Cousins speaks of the rapid strides that the Japanese have made since the war, especially since 1949. I believe I can see through the thin fabric of these claims of great reclamation. Japan has made marvelous surface recovery, true. Factories hum with activity; streets are crowded with shoppers; theatres, arenas, ball parks are filled to capacity. Western culture blossoms everywhere. But what of the rural population, the balance of 80,000,000, the people who have evolved little in the past centuries? What of the high taxes, the low-salaried workers, the inflationary level of their unpredictable currency, the black market, the windowless schools and hospitals?

From a bird's-eye view of the thriving Ginza-dori or a sideline angle at the revolutionary progress at Hiroshima one unfamiliar with the Japanese and things Oriental would—I believe—receive a rose-colored picture of the actual state of Nippon today.

WILLIAM D. COX.

Mobile, Ala.



"If *I* ever write a play, it certainly won't be about life in the coal mines!"

Cold Comfort

SIR: Peter Viereck's "The Decline and Immortality of Europe" [*SRL* Mar. 3] will give cold comfort to Europeans. It's like watching your neighbor get hanged. You tell him everything's OK, you'll take care of his wife. I dunno. He's not much consoled.

ROBERT C. HART.

Evanston, Ill.

Agony in Suburbia

SIR: In keeping with mankind's current preoccupation and interest in war and its horrors we are again inundated by a flood of war novels. Our young authors in their almost fanatic attempt to portray the understandable "war is hell" theme inevitably overemphasize it. We have a central character, a G.I., who is so completely shattered emotionally by the realization that death and suffering are a part of war that he self-righteously allows himself to "lose his grip." He becomes the Moral Degenerate, the Spiritual Moron, or eventually the unavoidable Alcoholic.

War is a beastly, disgusting, degrading thing, as few of us in this small world do not know. But why do our young war writers give the impression of having large chips on their shoulders? The undertone of "you cannot know because you were not there" aimed at the harmless reader leaves him in a somewhat guilty mood. The Hero is released from any responsibility to society and is excused for weaknesses of character, all because the author insists that *only* those who have been on the battlefield have ever suffered. By this time the poor reader is shamefully and mentally begging forgiveness for his unpardonable sin of being a civilian, although he may be dying of cancer himself.

If these intense young men would pause and gaze around them they might discover that on a peaceful afternoon in a pleasant suburb all the mental tortures and physical agony of a thousand battles might be raging in a single individual—in the solitude of his own private "hell."

L. S. JAMES.

Corning, N. Y.

Kenneth Patchen Fund

SIR: This morning I have received the most extraordinary letter, and I should like to share with my fellow Americans the immense satisfaction we have jointly earned for the care and honor we have given to one of our own cultural voices. It appears that Kenneth Patchen, who creates poetry instead of atomic Juggernauts or lethal gases, is now helplessly bedridden and destitute. We have so richly rewarded Patchen for his fifteen books that a public campaign must be made to raise the sum of $10,000 for his hospitalization and treatment.

It is true, of course, that Patchen has written neither for our cinema nor for the potboiler bonanzas. He didn't write any "Forever Amber." However, if anyone cares about a young poet, he might send something to the Kenneth Patchen Fund, C/o Julien Cornell, Central Valley, N. Y.

STEFEN VERK.

New York, N. Y.

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Seeing Things

A NEW MISS HELLMAN

IN MANY ways "The Autumn Garden"* is unlike any of Lillian Hellman's previous works. The same muscularity of mind, the same command of authentic dialogue, the same willingness to face unpleasant people as they are, and the same instinctive awareness of the theatre's needs which have always animated her writing are present. But the mood, the tone, the flavor, the point of view and hence the means employed are so different from those of "The Children's Hour," "The Little Foxes," "Watch on the Rhine," and "Another Part of the Forest" that it is no overstatement to say a new Miss Hellman has emerged.

For the first time in her distinguished career she has, so to speak, turned her back on Ibsen and moved into the camp of Chekhov. To the casual reader such a shift in allegiance may seem unimportant. To the theatre-minded, however, it represents a change in attitude, method, and purpose of the utmost significance. Were an old-guard Republican to become a New Dealer or vice versa; were a Catholic to turn Campbellite or a Campbellite to make the trip to Rome, the about-face could not be more complete.

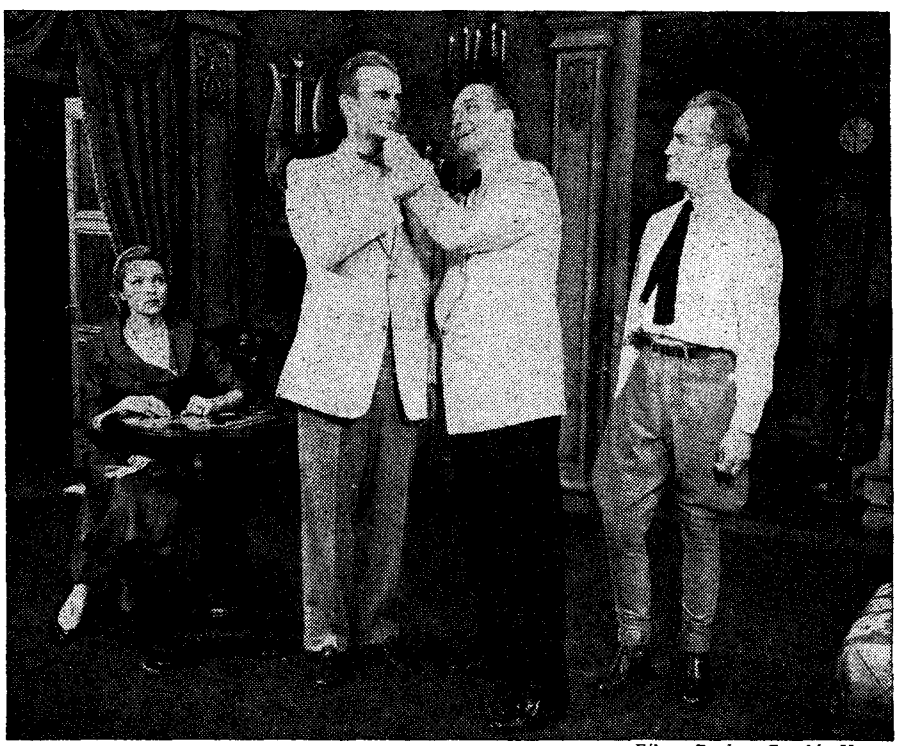
Ibsen and Chekhov were irreconcilables in their approaches to the drama. Their differences were sufficiently fundamental to be described as a schism rather than a disagreement. Yet their influences have been so far-reaching that, though Chekhov of recent years has proved the more beckoning, each still has his followers and the two of them can be said to divide serious prose dramatists into Montagues and Capulets.

The Ibsen who remains a rallying point, however dwindling, is not the Ibsen of the early poetic plays or of the shadowy last scripts. It is the Ibsen of the social dramas; the Ibsen who had had "a Pegasus shot out from under him." It is Ibsen the realist; the Ibsen who, in addition to his concern with ideas, was supreme as an architect in the construction of a plot or the unraveling of a character.

The Chekhov who quite understandably has mesmerized so many contemporary playwrights put the identical medium to drastically dissimilar uses. Mood not plot was what mattered to him. He did not reveal his people. He invited them to be self-revealing. Their plight did not raise general ethical questions. His characters were the victims of themselves; wandering egos, frustrated and despairing, who lived in a constant state of spiritual cross-ventilation. Their inner lives were as active as their outward lives seemed becalmed. They possessed a greater talent for talking than for listening. When they talked, although they created the illusion of speaking as everyday mortals will, they really spoke a language which was beyond reality if for no other reason than that, while pretending to deal with surface things, it laid bare the most interior truths of their dreams and disappointments.

Even in her most loyal Ibsenite days Miss Hellman was never a copyist. Far from it. She had found her own way of making her own comment upon the American scene. She was a progressive who was old-fashioned only in the sense that in a period of slovenly workmanship she continued to write "well-made plays." Her pride as a craftsman was clear. She excelled at contrivances, at big scenes, and sulphurous melodramatics. Although sometimes misled into overcomplicating her plots, she wrote with fervor as a person to whom ideas and causes came naturally. The protest in her voice was strong. It was as characteristic of her as the energy of her attack or the neatness of her planning.

BUT a change has come over Miss Hellman in "The Autumn Garden." Instead of working up to her big crises she chooses now to walk deliberately away from them. She is writing of a group assembled at a summer boarding-house in Louisiana. Unlike the Hubbards who stalked through "Another Part of the Forest" and "The Little Foxes," these people are not notable for their violence or their villainy. They are people who "haven't done anything to themselves; they have let it be done to them." The sources of their frustration and defeat have not been large or showy. They have been small and almost imperceptible in their quietness. The chief and not uncommon trouble with these men and women is that they have never been able to face the truth about themselves. What forces them to take stock is the reappearance after twenty-three years of a no-good, hard-drinking, girl-chasing painter (Fredric March), whose chief activity is butting into other people's affairs. He becomes involved in a scandal which, though groundless, creates a sensation



—Eileen Darby—Graphic House.

Jane Wyatt, Kent Smith, Fredric March, Colin Keith-Johnston—"blood not ink."

*THE AUTUMN GARDEN, by Lillian Hellman. Directed by Harold Clurman. Setting by Howard Bay. Costumes by Anna Hill Johnstone. Presented by Kermit Bloomgarden. With a cast including Fredric March, Florence Eldridge, Jane Wyatt, Ethel Griffies, Kent Smith, Carol Goodner, Colin Keith-Johnston, Margaret Barker, Joan Lorring, etc. At the Coronet Theatre, New York City. Opened March 7, 1951.

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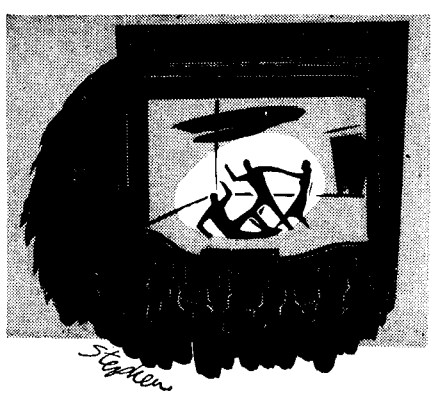
in the small town and helps to bring about the ultimate truth-facing of Miss Hellman's characters.

To try to suggest in synopsis form the complicated relationships upon which "The Autumn Garden" depends for its power would be to do an injustice to Miss Hellman's play. These involvements are clearly established and in engrossing terms. The reason for their fascination, however, is not the story they tell. It is subtler and far more elusive than that. Since it is a matter of interior action, it has its origins in human truth rather than theatrical effectiveness.

Among Miss Hellman's characters is a benevolent drunk who for many years has been thought of as the fiancé of the spinster who runs the boarding-house. In the fine and very touching last scene of "The Autumn Garden" Miss Hellman has given this amiable inebriate words to speak which, quoted out of context, are almost pure Chekhov.

"I live in a room and I go to work," says this Southerner, "and I play a game called getting through the day while you wait for night. The night's for me . . . just me . . . and I can do anything with it I want. There used to be a lot of things to do with it, good things, but now there's a bar and another bar and the same people in each bar. When I've had enough I go back to my room . . . or somebody else's room . . . and that never means much one way or the other. A few years ago I'd have weeks of reading . . . night after night . . . just me. But I can't do that much any more. Just read all night long. You can feel good that way. . . . And a few years ago I'd go on the wagon twice a year. Now I don't do that any more. And I don't care. And all these years I told myself that if you'd loved me everything would have been different. I'd have had a good life, been worth something to myself. I wanted to tell myself that. I wanted to believe it. Griggs was right. I not only wasted myself, but I wanted it that way. All my life, I guess, I wanted it that way."

I quote these sentences in which a character not only reveals his inner



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anguishes but summarizes his spiritual autobiography because they are symptomatic. They indicate how Miss Hellman's interest has shifted from outward climaxes to inward crises. Although unquestionably such dialogue has echoes in it from "The Three Sisters" or "The Cherry Orchard," it must be quickly added that Miss Hellman remains an individualist even when she works as a Chekhovian.

Chekhov, of course, was blessed with a quality of poetry she cannot claim. He went further and saw more profoundly. Nonetheless, Miss Hellman has her own wise and penetrating contributions to make. Significantly enough her people belong to her as well as to the South. They do not, as did the characters in "The Wisteria Trees" (that restatement in Southern terms of "The Cherry Orchard"), seem imported. They may be more numerous than necessary. They may, as one of them points out, "take many words to say simple things." But they are indigenous. They have blood, not ink, in their veins. They are shrewdly observed by a wise woman who is writing a play which, in spite of its faults, is in many ways the most mature and probing to have come from her gifted pen.

The production "The Autumn Garden" has been given is of constant assistance. It is attractively set by Howard Bay and admirably directed by Harold Clurman. Mr. Clurman understands what Miss Hellman is up to. He knows she has elected to write a talkative script which runs the risk of seeming discursive. Yet he also knows the value of what she is doing and how she is doing it. Although he creates the quiet, almost casual, atmosphere that is essential, he does not lose sight of the drama's inner tensions. He chaperones these firmly but unobtrusively.

The cast is an extraordinary one. Florence Eldridge has never given a more brilliant, fully rounded, or unforgettable performance than as the garrulous Southern bore who is the wife of a retired World War general. Mr. March is likewise in topnotch form as the bumbling artist who is a meddler and a cad. He plays him with great relish, with a wonderful eye for detail, and without glossing over any of his grievous faults.

Some admiring, though utterly inadequate, mention must also be made of Ethel Griffies's drive and accuracy as a sharp-tongued grandmother; of Margaret Barker's honesty as her confused daughter-in-law; of Carol Goodner's unaffected directness as the owner of the boarding-house; of Kent Smith's gentleness as the drunk who has disappointed her; and, lastly, of Jane Wyatt and Joan Lorring who, as Mr. March's rich wife and a realistic young French girl, have difficult because shadowy parts to act which they act extremely well.

It is exciting to have Miss Hellman try her hand at a different form of playwriting. Although she may not as yet have completely mastered it, in "The Autumn Garden" she has gone a long way towards doing so. The result is one of the season's most adult and rewarding plays.

—JOHN MASON BROWN.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. Crimean War. 2. Revolutionary War. 3. World War I. 4. War of 1812. 5. American Civil War. 6. Spanish Civil War. 7. American Civil War. 8. Revolutionary War. 9. Revolutionary War. 10. American Civil War. 11. World War II. 12. American Civil War. 13. Napoleonic Wars. 14. American Civil War. 15. World War II. 16. World War I. 17. World War II. 18. American Civil War. 19. Mexican War. 20. Revolutionary War.

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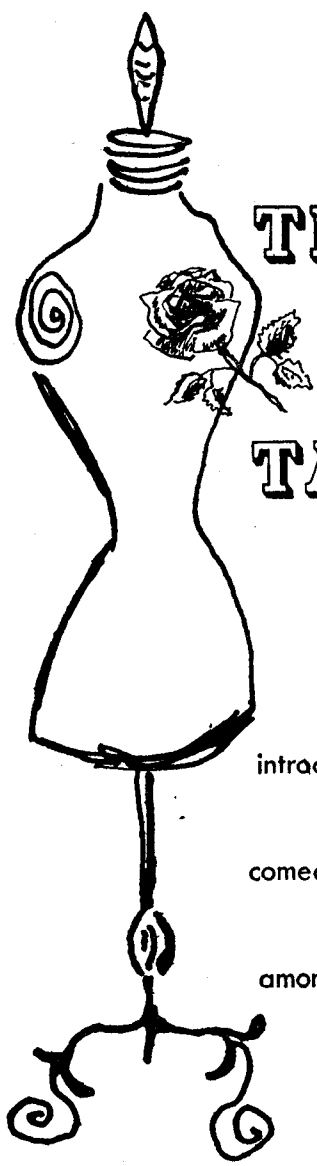

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SRL Goes to the Movies

ASSORTED GALLIC TRIO

Andrée Clement (left) and Pierre Fresnay (right) in "God Needs Men"—"why?"

"THE LOVERS of Verona" (Souvaine Selected Pictures), which its American distributors insist on calling "a retelling of the Romeo and Juliet story in terms of today," suffers immediately by the comparison. Our present-day Romeo is an ardent young glass blower from Venice, his Juliet a movie-struck girl who quite understandably wants to get away from her decadent Fascist family. They meet as stand-ins for the stars in a movie company on its way to Verona to film Shakespeare's tragedy against natural backgrounds, and their own story evolves as a sort of "movie within a movie." Thus by simple substitution Shakespeare's fiery Tybalt becomes Pierre Brasseur, a somewhat petulant petty racketeer in Venice; the proud Capulets are a seedy pair of impoverished aristocrats who front for his racket; and the Nurse is Marianne Oswald—as unlikely a duenna as any young girl ever had. And for tragedy has been substituted simple melodrama. The foregone conclusion of this film may be sad or depressing, but it is precisely as far from authentic tragedy as screenwriter Jacques Prevert's characters are from Shakespeare's.

Even so, the film does have moments. It is filled with good ideas that lend themselves to effective cinema, as when rehearsing the balcony scene the Romeo stand-in suddenly beholds his Juliet for the first time in the blinding glare of the kleig lights or the scene in which they wordlessly pledge their love as they move through a long tracking shot in Verona's monastery, the site of the original Juliet's tomb. It was probably the possibility of just such moments that originally suggested the story to André Cayatte, the author and director of "Lovers of Verona." But the sheer weight of his protracted simile results inevitably in a confused and confusing script. Anouk Aimee and Serge Reggiani, the star-crossed lovers, are properly youthful and sympathetic, and Pierre Brasseur makes a violent, caddish menace; but the picture's real performance comes from Louis Salou as the decaying aristocrat. The handsomely mounted exteriors, filmed in Venice and Verona, add immeasurably to the production, while the behind-the-scenes shots of a modern movie studio at work give an extra fillip of interest.

Far less pretentious, far less self-conscious, and on the whole far more entertaining is "Lady Paname" (Discina International Films), starring Louis Jouvet and Suzy Delair. A light-hearted romance with the Avenue St. Martin, the Paris Tin Pan Alley, for a background, it is filled with richly humorous characters and highly amusing situations. In essence the plot is not too far from standard Betty Grable fodder. An ambitious café singer makes a success in the Paris music halls singing the ballads of a young composer with whom she is constantly quarreling and whom she really loves. But the embroideries that writer-director Henri Jeanson has worked into this theme, its authentic theatre atmosphere, and warm theatre types—and particularly the exuberant Miss Delair and droll Louis Jouvet as her belligerent manager—make "Lady Paname" more than just another backstage musical. For some strange reason Jeanson has set his story in the late 1920's, which gives the picture the curious appearance of having been made sometime in the mid-Thirties. Actually, "Lady Paname" is a very recent film, but it is an emphatically Gallic entertainment no matter what its period. —ARTHUR KNIGHT.

* * *

The title "God Needs Men" (an A.F.E. release) provokes the question, "Why?"—and no answer comes in this case. Jehovah would be more likely to send an Egyptian plague on the feckless humans of this French film than to acknowledge any need of their superstitious worship. They inhabit the island of Sein off the coast of Brittany, a bit of land so barren that the islanders sustain themselves from the loot of shipwrecks and are not above wrecking ships themselves when need be. When they refuse to leave their evil ways their priest leaves *them*. Bereft of Christian comfort, they induce the verger of their church to officiate as curé, and most of the picture is occupied with his struggle to justify to himself and others what he is doing. Not all of it, though. A profusion of ideas hovers just out of reach, as though the directing intelligence dared not relinquish any one of them for fear it might turn out to be the main theme after all.

As a result I can give no clear account of what the picture thinks it is saying. Major footage is given over to details of ritual, which the islanders want the unanointed verger to carry on as usual. He dares not bless holy water (this is solved when rain drips through the roof into the font—a sign from God, of course); he is at first afraid to speak from the pulpit; he wavers long before he will celebrate mass or give communion. He is saved from the last sacrilege by the arrival of a priest whom the bishop has sent from the mainland to investigate and remedy this scandalous state of affairs and who is prudently escorted by gendarmes. At last the agony of the verger is over; now he can relinquish his office to a bona fide man of God. But no: when the islanders

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reject the new priest the verger casts his lot with them. Last scene of all finds him defying both priest and gendarmes by saying the burial service for a suicide in a postured mass finale.

Perhaps all this is meant to suggest the idea that people are entitled to worship God in their own way. It's hard to accept this, though, since the religion of these people is on the lowest level of animal cunning and the concept of repentance plays no part in it. They never mend their ways; confession and absolution simply wipe the slate clean and open the gates of heaven to a cutthroat crew who have richly enjoyed their sins on earth. Even the suicide over whom we are asked to sentimentalize is the unrepentant murderer of his mother. Sympathy for these people is hard to generate, and not much more is forthcoming for the crabbed priest who is as much concerned with the islanders' breach of canon law as with their crimes. Faced with all these cross currents, you are tempted to write the picture off as one more makeshift in the profitable exploitation of Pierre Fresnay as a God intoxicated man.

The island, with its heavy seas and quaint houses, is starkly real, but the "peasants" who play before it as against a backdrop are straight from the Comédie Française. Perhaps the picture will please those who like to think they admire documentary films but insist on a mixture of make-believe. —RICHARD GRIFFITH.

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ANNOUNCER: And now, ladies and gentlemen, your two favorite daytime serials — "Costello Faces Life" and "Just Plain Bill O'Dwyer" — brought to you on television each week day, Monday through Friday, by Time. But before we follow the further adventures of our two beloved characters, a word from the sponsor.

MUSIC UP AND FADES:

ANNOUNCER: Men, are you serving Time? Do you wake up mornings wondering how much Time before you get out? Does Time hang heavy on your hands? Why not subscribe to a good magazine to help pass that Time? More about that later. But now—back to "Costello Faces Life" and "Just Plain Bill O'Dwyer.

MUSIC UP AND UNDER:

ANNOUNCER: Well, when last we met Costello and Just Plain Bill they were testifying before a Senate Committee, but, since the proceedings were being televised for all to see, they were really being tried before a jury of their amperes. Costello, you remember, had been suddenly stricken with laryngitis, and a doctor had been called who had divulged that his patient was suffering from an eighteen-year-old malady, and Costello's lawyer, Mr. Wolf, claimed the seven-year statute of limitations had run out. But Senator Kefauver had promised that the Committee would assign its own doctor to examine Costello. Meanwhile Jim Moran, Just Plain Bill O'Dwyer's friend, had been called. Jim, you remember, had once been the Fire Commissioner, but when he saw what it took to put out a fire he had become the Water Commissioner. Jim had told the Committee he had seen Senor Louis Weber, who had left Puerto Rico to come here to take over the policy racket, at least three times but at the most four or five times, and he was telling them how the last time he saw Senor Weber the senor had given him a bottle of perfume, which he thought was "damned nice," when suddenly the door opened and who should come in but Louis Weber himself. Louis was saying he had never seen Jim in his life, when suddenly there appeared a receptionist from Jim's office who said that Louis Weber had come to the office at least eight times a month to see Jim, and in two and a half years he figured that was at least fifty times. As Louis Weber walked out of the committee-room he was arrested and held in $25,000 bail, but Frank Bals, who had been with the Police Department when Just Plain O'Dwyer was Mayor, had come in to say that Abe Reles, who had been held in custody out at the Half Moon Hotel, had stepped out of the window of the sixth floor on to the terrace but to his amazement had found there was no terrace and was badly killed. Meanwhile Virginia Hill, unaware that Abe Reles had been killed and, as it later turned out, unaware of Abe Reles at all, was vacationing at Sun Valley spending $12,500 which had been sent to her by friends in Mexico named Miguel or Gonzales or neither. When she heard of the committee meeting in New York she left Sun Valley at once, came

"Here's a request for 'The Volga Boatman' from some of the gang at the U.N."

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to do what she could, stopping briefly in Paris, Mexico, and Chicago, where she met Ben Epstein, whom the committee has been trying to find, and she told them he was at the Clover Club bar in Chicago, which, as it later turned out, reminded the committee it was time for a brief recess. Meantime, unbeknown to Costello, George Morton Levy, who owns the Roosevelt Raceway, where horses run and on which Virginia Hill told the committee she made all her money because she got such good tips, was telling the committee that he paid Costello $15,000 a year to keep the bookmakers away. But Costello later said he didn't do anything much for the money, but he would like to meet the man who would turn it down, because such men are very far and few. But that was before Just Plain Bill O'Dwyer told about going to see Costello at his house when he was Major O'Dwyer (not to be confused with Mayor O'Dwyer) and had talked to Costello about Joe Baker, who had been buying up planes at Wright Field but who later turned out to be Joe Zucker. Governor Dewey, meanwhile, who had been stricken with a 102-degree temperature, said he couldn't come to the committee but invited them to come to Albany, which was more than Albert Anastasia did who, you remember, had been stricken with conjunctivitis. But Willie Moretti, who had been stricken with a nervous breakdown, has not been heard from, and the search still goes on for Irving Sherman, who has been stricken with amnesia.

But while these voices were still, suddenly Costello's voice had cleared up and he answered many questions, after having refused to answer the questions two days in a row and was held in contempt of the committee. Will Costello be fined every time he is in contempt of the committee? Will they fine him $1,000 for each offense? Will he spend a year in jail in addition to the $1,000 fine for each offense? Will the committee run out of years before Costello runs out of thousand dollars? Only Time will tell . . . And speaking of Time, here is a brief message from our sponsor. Do you have the Time to read a good magazine? If you have, the magazine for you is obviously *The Saturday Review of Literature.*

MUSIC UP AND OUT:

— GOODMAN ACE

Music to My Ears

"THE KING AND I" & RICHARD RODGERS—VICTORIA DE LOS ANGELES

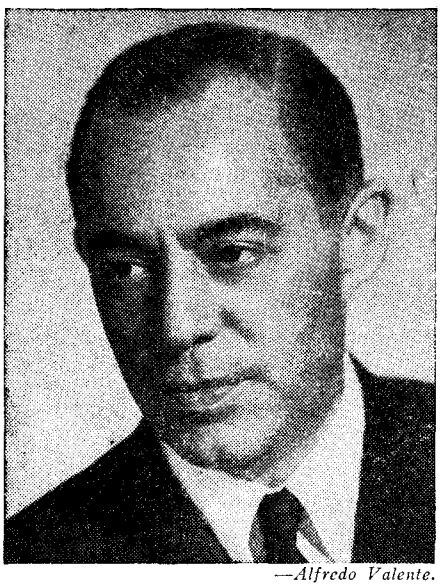
AS much as I know about Siam and its musical characteristics is contained in a story that concerns a king of Siam who visited England during the reign of Queen Victoria. Court ceremony included an evening at a symphony concert, following which the king was asked which part of the evening he enjoyed most. He replied: "When everybody was playing before the conductor came out."

It's faintly conceivable that this king might, in fact, have been the son of the one who is the central character of Margaret Landon's "Anna and the King of Siam," as the novel and film were known, or "The King and I," as the current stage version by Oscar Hammerstein II and Richard Rodgers is called. If so, he is by now considerably more of a musical sophisticate.

However, what he has learned does not have much to do with the music of Siam. Rodgers's score is fertile and fresh and full of his own kind of sentiment and warmth, but its association with anything more than superficially Oriental is slight indeed. Having gone halfway across the Western ocean in "South Pacific," the partners have, consciously or not, been tempted to go full circle. My personal feeling is that we'll all be happier when the Pacific impulse is out of these well-respected collaborators, when they become less pacific and more militantly native again.

The simple fact is that Rodgers is so much and so uncontrollably himself that fine tunes like "Hello, Young Lovers" or "We Kiss in a Shadow" or "Something Wonderful" have no more to do with Siam or the Siamese than "Un bel di" in "Butterfly" has to do with Japan. However, we still look to Rodgers and Hammerstein to break paths and set standards in their field; so far as music and affiliated matters are concerned they are mostly marking time in this venture.

The "affiliated matters" contain a lively use of music in place of native speech in the early episodes of the play where Anna has to converse through an interpreter. (The stage characters are mute, while orchestral clarinets and bassoons provide sounds for them.) This is ingenious but vanishes rather abruptly when it appears everybody had learned to speak English. The inescapable ballet episode is musically rather nondescript but



—*Alfredo Valente.*

Richard Rodgers—"fertile and fresh score."

choreographically diverting, thanks to Jerome Robbins's staging (with the assistance of Michiko) of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in terms of Siamese traditional dance. This serves a purpose in the basic story and manages to be amusing in itself; one could hardly ask more of a ballet in a Broadway musical.

For that matter, one could hardly ask more of music in a Broadway musical were it not credited to the men who gave us "Oklahoma!," "Carousel," and "South Pacific." Without being stuffy about the whole thing I'd say that this score marks a merely human digression from the big progress therein achieved. Let's hope, merely, that the next thing that strikes their fancy also strikes fire, rather than merely the synthetic fireworks of Siam so far from home.

Consideration of the musical interest of "The King and I" would be incomplete without mention of Dorothy Sarnoff, who is cast as Lady Thaiang, the King's head wife, and Doretta Morrow, who plays Tuptim, the latest feminine fancy of the King, as of the date of the play's action. Miss Sarnoff has a worthy record of accomplishment in "Magdalena" and "Rosalinde" but she is much more mature and poised now, with a rich voice for such a song as "Something Wonderful." Miss Morrow, of modest prominence in "Where's Charley?" for a year and a half, sings attractively as Tuptim, looks the part of a neighboring prince's "gift" to per-

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fection, and reads lines when necessary with self-possession and good effect.

* * *

Victoria de los Angeles's second Metropolitan Opera appearance (as Butterfly) and her fourth in New York was the first, really, in which she matched the expectations aroused by the recordings that had preceded her from Europe and the word of mouth that followed them. Both as Marguerite, the week before, and in her two recital appearances Miss de los Angeles had been a performer of quality, certainly, but also a rather constrained and uneven one. As Butterfly, however, she was more at ease physically than she had been in the action of Marguerite; and after a little tentativeness in the "Entrance" music (she spared herself the climaxing C), she settled into a vocal stride both relaxed and confident. With this confidence came a vocal coloration and shaping of words to musical phrases wholly unusual among her contemporaries at the Metropolitan in musical art and subtlety of feeling.

Miss de los Angeles's Butterfly is certainly the most interesting new one we have seen since Licia Albanese first sang the part here in the late Thirties; and there is every possibility that the Spanish artist can go on to be an even finer Butterfly than the admired Albanese. She will have to watch her weight, which is already close to the legal limit for a sixteen-year-old Geisha girl; and I would be happier were her top more freely produced. (She managed a loud C at the end of the first act, but it wasn't a very pure tone.) However, she is clearly an artist, a woman of sensibility, and a musician of taste, who gives the Metropolitan the kind of lyric soprano around whom fine performances can be built. In this one, though she was new to the role here, she bolstered Eugene Conley (Pinkerton) and Giuseppe Valdengo (Sharpless) more than they aided her. Margaret Roggero's well-sung Suzuki (a first time) was a little lost in the audience enthusiasm for De los Angeles. Alberto Erede was the conductor, and a notably efficient one.

De los Angeles may sing a compelling Marguerite when she returns for a longer engagement next season, but the one of her debut was rather cool, detached, and impersonal. Marguerite's blonde hair and the blue gown favored at the Metropolitan were not to her visual advantage, and her singing, though well controlled, was also guarded and without dramatic fervor. In view of the succeeding Butterfly, however, this may be left as an interim judgment, subject to revision.

—Irving Kolodin.

MUSIC

(*Continued from page 23*)

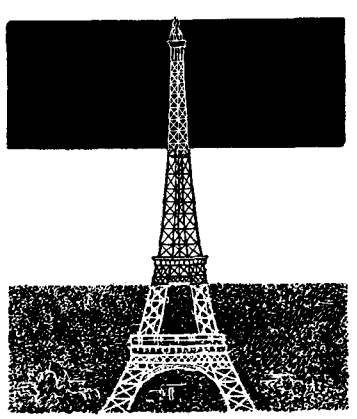
tailed, pervasive care which has left Mr. Marek's "Puccini" not as solid or as useful as it should have been. The book is to be admired for its generosity of spirit, its congenial warmheartedness, its lack of pomposity and pretentiousness. Unhappily but certainly these virtues will not make up for poor planning and unclear writing. Despite this book, despite earlier lives of Puccini by Adami, Fraccaroli, and Specht, the difficult and peculiar problems presented by the life and works of that ambiguous and popular composer remain unsolved.

Old Musical Culture

STUDIES IN MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE MUSIC. By Manfred F. Bukofzer. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 324 pp. $6.

By Gustave Reese

IN HIS new book Manfred F. Bukofzer returns with evident relish and brilliant results to two of his favorite fields, English music and music of the fifteenth century, all seven essays in the volume being concerned with one of these fields or with both. As a result and because he skilfully points out the many interrelations between his various subjects the book achieves a greater degree of unity than one would ordinarily expect from a collection of separate studies. This not only adds to the literary attractiveness of the volume as a whole but rightly emphasizes the organic totality of the old musical culture, of which the various subjects are facets.



The essays on the Old Hall Manuscript and on the emergence of choral polyphony have appeared before in somewhat different form. Both, containing information first presented by the author, are well deserving of republication.

Of the new contributions the last is by all odds the *pièce de résistance*. Dufay, Ockeghem, and Obrecht each write a mass on the cantus firmus, "Caput," and musical scholars have long searched in vain for its source. Dr. Bukofzer has tracked it down in the melodic flourish that sets the last word ("caput") in the Sarum version of the antiphon, "Venit ad Petrum." His "Head"-hunting having yielded this trophy, he proceeded to reconstruct the liturgical background of the antiphon, which was apparently never a part of the Roman rite. His investigations have produced a fine comparative study of the foot-washing ceremony during Holy Week (to which "Venit ad Petrum" belongs), according to various local medieval uses. The resulting ninety-four-page liturgico musical essay strikingly shows how far research workers must sometimes go beyond their specialties if they are really to master their subjects.

Of the remaining essays the one dealing with two fourteenth-century motets on St. Edmund again places old music within a not too familiar liturgical background, besides providing expert musical analysis. The study on the "Fountains Fragment" extracts, in Dr. Bukofzer's words, "a surprisingly large amount of both supplementary and new information from a small fragment" of English fifteenth-century polyphony. "Holy-Week Music and Carols at Meaux Abbey" includes information on the musical and literary structure of the carol form—especially on the importance of distinguishing between burden and chorus—that will undoubtedly be appreciated by literary as well as musical scholars. "A Polyphonic Basse Dance of the Renaissance" assembles interesting data on the ubiquitous "Spagna" melody which underlies many Renaissance dance pieces, offers new evidence concerning the use of basse-dance melodies as cantus firmi, and sheds light on the rhythm of those melodies.

We take exception to none of Dr. Bukofzer's major points. But some side issues lead to debatable ground. For example, he states that the contents of certain Renaissance monophonic collections are actually tenor melodies extracted from polyphonic pieces, but this is not true in all the collections he names. No small reservations, however, can obscure the fact that this is a major contribution by one of the greatest living authorities on medieval and Renaissance music.

Gustave Reese, a member of the New York University graduate school faculty, is author of "Music in the Middle Ages." He is completing a volume on "Music of the Renaissance."

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Music & Dance Notes

ESSAYS ON LITERATURE, PHILOSOPHY, AND MUSIC. By Andrei A. Zhdanov. International Publishers. 96 pp. $1.50. If Rip Van Winkle after a lethargic sleep of thirty-three years had chanced upon this collection of intellectual pomposities by the late Andrei A. Zhdanov he would not have understood the meaning of the word Soviet, but he would have rightly concluded that the essays and speeches were utterances of a confirmed reactionary and obscurantist opposed to all new and original ideas, a dogmatic believer in the absolute sanctity of established national tradition. Rip would have thought it an unfunny joke had he been told that Zhdanov was a member of an extreme revolutionary party devoted to making the world anew.

Zhdanov's "essay" on literature is an attack on "decadence" in the literary journals *Leningrad* and *Zvezda* ("Star"), which resulted in the expulsion of the poet Anna Akhmatova and the humorist Zoshchenko from the pages of Soviet publications. The essay on philosophy is a criticism of a textbook by one Alexandrov, in which the defendant seemed to be guilty of anti-Marxist idealistic deviations. The pronunciamento on music—the one that had most repercussions in the world press—is an assault on Shostakovich, Prokofieff, and so on, for their failure to write pleasant music accessible to Zhdanov and men of his mentality.

Zhdanov's literary style is the dreary jargon of a small-town intellectual, full of common clichés and worn-out quotes from Russian classics. If it were not for the ominous fact that Zhdanov had wielded absolute power in the field of the arts in Russia his outpourings might be dismissed as amateur intellectualizing. To quote from one of Zhdanov's favorite Russian plays, "Gorye ot Uma" ("Woe from Intelligence")—"I give you my *Feldwebel* [a sergeant] for your Voltaire." Zhdanov was the *Feldwebel* in charge of Russian arts and literature.

—Nicolas Slonimsky.

DANCERS AND CRITICS. Edited by Cyril Swinson. Macmillan. $1.50. Twelve ballet critics deal with as many dancers in this little book which balletomanes will want to read, though it may provoke sneers from some quarters. (What? my favorite ballerina missing?) Cyril Beaumont, that dean of ballet connoisseurs, is represented by a sort of introductory essay dedicated to Margot Fonteyn, describing the practice of ballet criticism. Then the other contributors saunter forth, generally prefacing their dissertations with a few comments on ballet criticism as they see it. More platitudes are gravely turned over than pancakes in a Childs window; and to a large extent hysteria rather than balanced criticism prevails. "Fusion of spiritual conception with the brilliant physical performance. . . " (Pierre Michaut on Lina Vyroubova.) "The Dance, in its pure state. . . . The unity of a life conducted like a work of art, and an art lived as a life. . ." (Léandre Vaillat on Tamara Toumanova.) "A sort of modern Psyche, a living sculpture . . . esthetic perfection." (Irène Lidova on Yvette Chauviré.) Or we get such amazing statements as the one by Joan Lawson that Danilova never steps out of the picture to assert her own individuality; "she sinks her own identity entirely and seeks to bring out the outstanding qualities of her role."

Fortunately, there are some saner judgments to relieve these love affairs. Anatol Chujoy's piece on Maria Tallchief is thorough, logical, and critical in the best sense of the word: he assesses this remarkable ballerina as he sees her, analyzing her good and not so good characteristics equally and fairly. Caryl Brahms does an interesting summary of Jean Babilee, as does P. W. Manchester with George Skibine. Other contributions of greater or lesser value include A. V. Coton on Beryl Grey, A. H. Franks on Alicia Markova, Arnold L. Haskell on Irène Skorik, Walter Terry on Nora Kaye, and Audrey Williamson on Robert Helpmann.

—Rosalyn Krokover.

Full Circle

By Harold Zlotnik

TIME has a way of returning:
The ages are climbing delays;
But always mankind is moving
In curves and in curves all
his days
And now his achievements
are proving
Themselves in circuitous ways.

Time has a way of returning,
From cave to the stars to the cave.
What can we plan for the future
To neutralize wave upon wave
Of language of flame and of suture
But fire to comfort the grave?

Time has a way of returning,
Now hooping its head to its tail.
O pity that we can remember
Man's antediluvian wail,
His sun-strength which atoms
dismember,
His planet renatured to scale.

FICTION

(*Continued from page* 21)

erary are Jerusalem, Constantinople, Athens, Naples, Acre, Tripoli, and many, many others. Having run away from his home in Norway because of a suspicion that he had killed his stepfather, Andrew launches forth on a grand adventure which ultimately lands him in the alien Frankish Kingdom of Jerusalem, which endured for a hundred years and was held by the Crusaders only by almost constant fighting, broken only intermittently by truces. Saladin himself does not appear as a villain but as a rather fair-minded man, even though an ardent patriot and an enemy of the invader. The Crusaders as allies did not work in unity, and it is little wonder that in the end Saladin overthrew them.

The weakness of the narrative lies in its love story, which is rather thin for a novel of this kind; but the background of the book is thorough and expansive and provides a picture of a world possessed of and obsessed with an idea, in some respects not unlike our own.

—John Cournos.

THE BED SHE MADE. By Leslie Waller. Dial. $2.75. The New York career girl with all her loneliness, frustrations, and frailties has rarely been more bitterly or more honestly presented than in Leslie Waller's new novel. His heroine, Ann Bowie, is not a pleasant character—she drinks, sleeps around, smokes marijuana cigarettes. Her saving grace is self-understanding. Although she is thoroughly aware of her degradation, she is so deeply enmeshed in the forces that drive her toward self-destruction that she lacks the courage or will to extricate herself.

Ann had come to New York to become a writer and to escape an unhappy home, where her father had been driven to suicide by an unfaithful, pleasure-seeking wife. Once the excitement, newness, and gaiety of the big city had worn off she found herself adrift, friendless, and aimless. To fill the empty void she indulges in casual affairs, but she despises her lovers—the rich, lecherous Paul, the disorganized artist Jimmy, the sensitive Negro musician Al. In her wild despair and self-hatred she attempts to destroy them as well as herself. In the end it is Weber, the one man whose life contains purpose and meaning, who provides the straw to which she reaches out in her final desperation.

Mr. Waller's pungent, staccato style

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reflects the corrosive tempo and mood of New York. His understanding of the city's brutalizing influences and of Ann Bowie's inner drives makes her a tragic figure. Except for her background, she somehow reminds one of Tennessee Williams's unhappy heroines. Like the playwright, Mr. Waller has the gifts of eloquence and compassion. —RAY PIERRE.

WAITING FOR WILLY. By Jack Houston. Rinehart. $2.50. Jack Houston's first novel barely misses being as memorable a piece of rural roughhouse as "God's Little Acre." It tells of the violent and ribald night which most of the males of a tiny town in Oklahoma spend in waiting fruitlessly for a young woman named Willy White to join them in the bushes. There are three principal groups of waiters—the married stiffs, the unmarried men, and the boys. There are individual operators, too: misfits, lone wolves, and men you'd never have thought it of.

The narrative shifts back and forth a little skittishly from one group or individual to another. It is told almost entirely in dialogue—raucous, profane, repetitious dialogue which is absolutely convincing. Mr. Houston has a fine ear, a good eye, too, and the trick of finding just the few, pert words of physical description needed to bring the speakers of his dialogue into full sight. Here, for example, is his phrase for Dorsey, the tall, turkey-like ballplayer: "His nose broke in and down to a right-hand batter."

But Mr. Houston is an easy victim for a baseball metaphor himself. He's a pitcher who can throw everything except a fast ball, for his book has everything it needs except effective action. Time after time he gets us set up for it and then throws wide on the three-two count — letting a shot be heard but not seen, disposing of an important fight in two brief paragraphs, shifting away from the point of view of the participants just as we begin to relish an incident. And as the book approaches what ought to be a redeeming climax (last of the ninth, two men on) Mr. Houston suddenly turns around and heaves the ball into the outfield—for, while the final incident is appropriately horrific, it isn't a climax because it doesn't involve any of the principals.

Since Mr. Houston is fifty-two and a Tulsa business man it would stretch our figure to call him a promising rookie. In fact, his first performance deserves stronger praise. As soon as he learns to put over situations as lustily as he does people and the things they say he is going to be solid in the big league.

—VANCE BOURJAILY.

TELL IT TO ARUN

(*Continued from page 25*)

tempt were made to deprive other people of food because we might disagree with their leaders.

Arun finished making the fire and left. It occurred to me that what ought to be done was to take Arun to the United States on the very next plane and bring him before the Senate of the United States. One gets the feeling at this distance that the Congress is dealing not with human beings but with statistics. If the Congressmen don't want to send wheat to Arun and countless millions of his countrymen, then they ought to tell it to Arun directly. Let them answer Arun's questions—if they can. Let them hear about Arun's children and then tell him exactly why a nation which has a surplus of wheat does not feel that it wants to put politics to one side when people are starving. Then, after telling Arun why he will get no wheat, let the Congressmen finish the job. Let Congress recall the appropriation for the Voice of America and for all our information services abroad. Let us shut down all our efforts to combat Communist propaganda against us. There is no point telling our story to the world if there is nothing for us to say. All the Voice of America can do is to try to provide a real, true account of what is happening in America. What we say can and should be a reflection of what we do.

We have heard a great deal in recent years about the need to speak to peoples and not only to governments. The most powerful language in the world today is food. It is clearly understood. It builds bridges mightier by far than radio broadcasts or published material, especially when people have no radios or cannot read.

My purpose in coming to India was to try to tell the Indian people about America and to try to answer the many lies being told about us. Those lies are aimed at splitting America off from the rest of the world. Yet there is nothing Soviet propaganda can say about us that can do nearly the harm that we can do to ourselves if we should turn our back today not only on India but on the meaning of America itself. —N. C.

Wu Ching-hsiung who became John Wu and wrote

吳經熊著

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內心樂園

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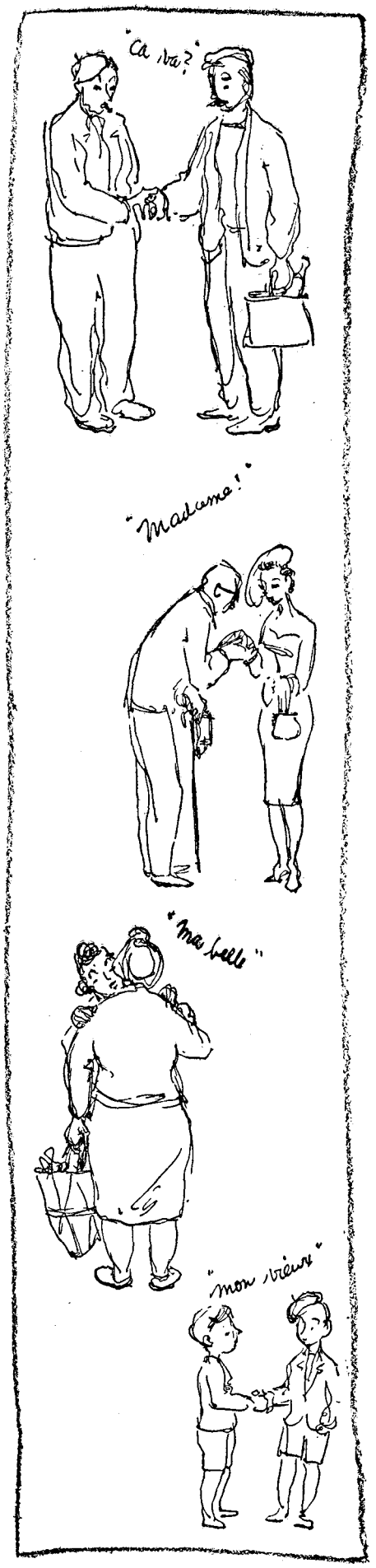

—*From "No Place Like Paris."*

"Parisian Politesse."

BOOKED for TRAVEL

PARIS POSTCARD

PARIS IN February was warm and rainy and filled only with Parisians and those members of the international brigade who stick it out all year around. Those who would come in the months soon to follow were still behind a table at New York's Chateaubriand, in front of a blackboard in Northampton, Massachusetts, or under a dryer in Dallas.

At the George V, where the tables and umbrellas would soon sprout in the courtyard, the bookings were languid and the eating, a ritual in season, was confined to a small dining corridor off the hall. Despite the time of the year and the *pluie*, it took less than twenty minutes the first morning in town (five minutes walk up to the Champs Elysées, ten minutes by Métro to the Place de la Concorde, and a few minutes down the Rue Rivoli) to turn up the first dingy character who sidled up—straight out of a Peter Arno cartoon—with "feelthy pictures." The rain, the time of the year, and the extremely narrow difference between the free rate and the official rate of the franc proved no deterrent to other dark individuals who slipped out of portals around the American Express Company, unerringly picked out the Americans, and said, "Change money?" Although the purveyors of pornographia and illegal (and often counterfeit) francs do enjoy what the Europeans call a "high season" from May until October, they neither hibernate in the winter nor transfer their operations to warmer climes.

Even in the dead of a dreary winter the prices in the extravagant hotels of the luxury tourist belt make no deference to the slim house count. A simple lunch in a fancy establishment can hardly run you less than 1,100 francs. Americans who will be objecting to those same prices when Paris is in bloom in a few weeks might learn a pointer from the Yankee colony which lives in town on a temporarily permanent basis.

I spent an evening in Paris with a prime example of the species, a photographer who makes a base in town, and we had trouble getting rid of ten dollars between us. We shuffled around in the St. Germain des Prés, a center for the creative coterie. Passing up the self-consciously Bohemian Café de Flore, once a Sartrean hangout, and the currently voguish Deux Magots we fell into the Brasserie Lipp, which still counts on a thread of French clients among the bold Americans. A fantastic, Victorian-looking saloon, it is decorated with tile walls, ornate lamp fixtures, and customers with unbridled mustaches, who play all the cocktail hour with a glass of Pernod, a sieve, a lump of sugar, and a jar of water. You put the sugar on the sieve, put the sieve on the glass, pour water on the sugar, and let the sweet dripping plunk into the Pernod.

A hangout of definite Alsatian flavor, the Lipp makes a fuss about its *Choucroute Garnie*, a haystack of sauerkraut with a slice of ham or pork and a number of assorted sausages. The dish is served at all times of the day and night (until closing time — one-thirty A.M.) and brings 300 francs, or less than ninety cents. Bacon and eggs cost sixty-five cents, a quart of champagne just under a dollar. We had a couple of drinks, a couple of hard-boiled eggs, and repaired to La Malene at 26 Rue St. Benoit for dinner. Small, intimate, and inexpensive, it gets a mix of serious young intellectuals, both French and American. It was refreshing to find them wearing plain business suits, shirts, and ties, unfettered by *barbes* or berets. A full dinner with mixed grill comes to about two dollars.

FOR a brandy we moved next door to La Librairie at 13 Rue St. Benoit, a place lined with bookcases and scarlet books, where they will sell you a drink, a book, or both. It gets a moving crowd of young international creatives who paint, write, sculpt, think, speak English or French, grow beards, and—to a man—wear loose-fitting cloaks that come equipped with wooden frog closures and a hood. For a souvenir I bought the water carafe right off the table. Its says "Pernod Fils" in big, blue letters, cost fifty francs, and sits now on our mantel holding a spray of Chinese evergreens.

To one coming in from Western Germany and the Low Countries Paris is the incomparable citadel of chic. One must tramp for hours through the streets of most European cities to find half the number of smart shops that are clustered on the Rue Faubourg St. Honoré, let alone the rest of Paris. And one comes away with the feeling that Paris exists merely to look beautiful. There is almost complete oblivion to the rumble from the

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East. The magazines and newspapers give an appreciable amount of space to French progress in Indo-China and to the activities of the few French troops in *Corée*, as they call it.

THE morning I arrived the Paris edition of the *New York Herald Tribune* carried a front-page story on the English lessons of President Auriol, who is scheduled to visit President Truman in Washington this week. The lessons, which were being administered every evening by Paul Auchinard of the National Broadcasting Company, were designed, so the story went, to permit President Auriol to carry on an ordinary conversation with President Truman. Mr. Auchinard reported Mr. Auriol a difficult pupil because every morning the President practised with British recordings. That evening Auchinard would find it necessary to correct Auriol's pronunciation to Washington enunciative standards. This wasn't Mr. Auriol's first tussle with English, the *Tribune* announced. While hiding from the Germans he had a go at the language, "but he was unable to master pronunciation during this period and so understood almost nothing when he fled to England in 1943." Nonetheless, Mr. Auchinard expected to have Mr. Auriol in linguistic shape for his arrival, barring Cabinet crises. What effect the recent fall of the Pleven Government will have on the Auriol-Truman conversations only the next day or so can tell.

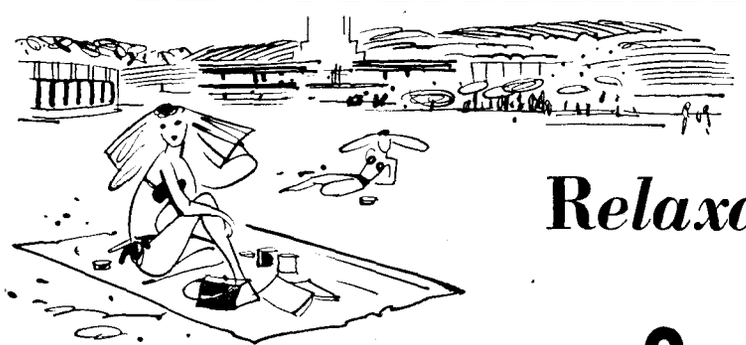
Auriol, who will be sixty-seven in August, comes from a long line of farmers and bakers who established themselves on a small tract of land in Southwestern France during the French Revolution. A member of the bar of Toulouse, he swung to the Socialist side. He became editor of *Le Midi Socialist* and founded the first newspapermen's guild in Southwestern France. Blum appointed him Finance Minister in his first Cabinet of 1936, and Auriol appeared again in the second Blum Cabinet of 1938.

His war record, which includes a number of cops-and-robber escapades with the Gestapo, approximates that of many French politicos now in power. He was one of the eighty deputies who on July 10, 1940, voted against giving full powers to Marshal Pétain, an act of courage which won for him a sojourn in jail until April 1941.

Released, he worked alternately on his seven acres and with the Resistance. When the Germans occupied the Southern zone he fled into the mountains to join General de Lattre de Tassigny, now in charge of the French forces in Indo-China. Auriol lost fifty pounds, took on a beard and two successive aliases. None of these disguises clouded the Gestapo's trail for very long, and late in 1943 a Wellington bomber landed on a secret airstrip near Mâcon and took off five minutes later with a load of Resistance leaders, Auriol among them.

With the Germans dispatched, Auriol returned to France as Minister of State under De Gaulle. After he was sent to the National Assembly by his home department, his confreres elected him first President of the Fourth Republic in January of 1947. He will serve for seven years.

As President, Auriol lives with his wife, his son, daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren at the Elysée Palace in Paris. Built in 1718, the residence lists as previous tenants Madame de Pompadour, Napoleon, and Josephine. In Washington President Auriol should fall easily into the daily habits of early-riser Truman. At home the French President studies his diplomatic dispatches, his mail, and the newspapers from six until eight-thirty A.M. every day. He then follows the debates in both houses of the legislature on a special radio connected to the microphones in the congressional chambers. The system, he says, gives him a head start in forming a new Cabinet once the old



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one has fallen, an eventuality which in France is certain and frequent.

On Fridays Auriol scoots out of Paris for a four-day weekend in a five-room house at Marly. In the country he continues to rise at six A.M., takes long walks in the Presidential woods, and occasionally hunts for pheasant, partridge, and hare. He reads the classics, avoids novels, and is himself the author of "Hier . . . Demain" and "De Versailles à Washington," both political studies.

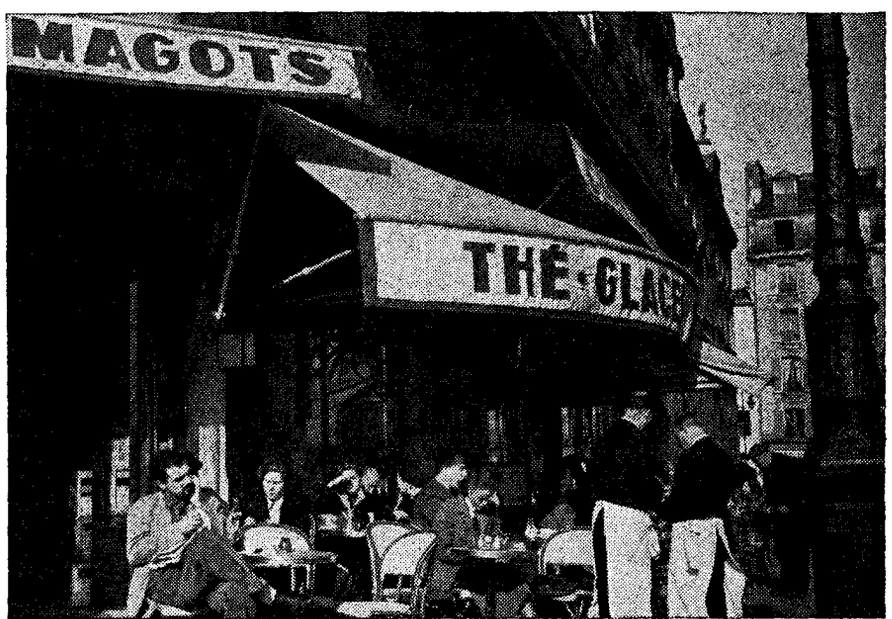
Like Truman, Auriol is fond of music, being particularly concerned with the efforts of Mozart, Beethoven, Berlioz, and Debussy. He once studied the violin, but official Washington can look forward to no piano-violin international, Presidential duets. Like the Auriol English, the Auriol violin is a little rusty. —HORACE SUTTON.

TRAVELERS' TALES

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE PARIS! By Helene MacLean. Illustrated by Susanne Suba. Doubleday. $2.50. A lively, pretty, Parisian little book of advice that will leave you without a *gaucherie* to commit. Mrs. MacLean having lived in Paris writes particularly for the American who is going to do likewise. She tells you what the Frenchman thinks of us, tosses off a few hints about language, tells you about the mysteries of the subterranean Métro. She explains why you grab a white ticket before grabbing a bus, why a cab driver may turn you down, why Frenchmen munch on trains, and how to develop patience while a *café filtre* drips on. She explains the position of the American Negro in society, the position of the men's room on the sidewalks, and why Parisians develop liver trouble the way we contract an ulcer. It's as pleasant as the Seine in spring, and it is helped immeasurably by the wonderful moods of Susanne Suba's sketches.

THE PARIS WE LOVE. Edited by Doré Ogrizek. McGraw-Hill. $6.50. A big, fat, colorful book, after the accepted fashion of the World in Color Series, of which this is a member. Mr. Ogrizek has carved up Paris like a deft butcher and assigned a chunk to a number of separate writers, among them such names as Cocteau, Maurois, and Jules Romains. Cocteau's piece is hardly two pages long, and I wouldn't plunk down $6.50 just for his contribution. There is, on the other hand, an opening section on art with color reproductions of the work of Corot, Monet, Daumier, Toulouse-Lautrec, Gauguin, and others. There is also a piece on history which serves to give one the origin of the place names.

I particularly liked the chapter called Paris in Former Times, by René Héron de Villefosse, and the straightforward prose of A. M. Max in The Nights of Paris, neither of which has seemed to suffer from the stilted effects of translation, an ill which has frequently dogged this series. And perhaps more vigilant editing might have kept the Flore, the Deux Magots, and other cafés of the St.-Germain-des-Prés from cropping up in three separate chapters and the opulent Tour d'Argent in at least two. There are the usual beautiful illustrations, one to a page, plus epigrams in colored type, no less, that say things like "When Paris takes snuff the whole of France sneezes." —H. S.



—*Horace Sutton.*

The currently voguish Deux Magots—"the Auriol violin is a little rusty."

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The Film Forum

NATURE AND SCIENCE

***The Saturday Review's* Weekly Guide to Selected 16mm. Sound Films.**

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Films about animal life to be more than merely routine glimpses of interesting and lively creatures require many skills other than that of capturing a difficult situation with the camera. Because so much patient preparation and waiting goes into each scene of a nature film the producer is apt to forget that photography is only part of the job—he has yet to edit the material with equal care and skill and to prepare a truly meaningful commentary before the photographic achievements can be fully appreciated by the public. Too often these other important steps in film-making are badly slighted.*

There are exemplary exceptions to this pessimistic view I take: the U. S. Department of Agriculture's "Realm of the Wild," Irving Jacoby's "High Over the Border," Jean Painlevé's scientific study of the sea horse, "L'Hippocampe," the Russian-photographed "Story of the Bees," Julian Huxley's "Monkey Into Man" and Arne Sücksdorff's bleak nature studies, among others. Although most of these films date back ten years or more they are as fresh and important today as when they were first shown.

The seven films reviewed below do not seriously challenge these classics. But because of their exciting material, fine photographic qualities, and genuine interest in what was going on in front of the camera they are far and away outstanding among current nature productions, providing valuable information and enjoyable screen hours for both school use and adult film programs.

MARVELS IN MINIATURE *(10 min., color).* FEATHERED FISHERS *(20 min., color).* CORAL WONDERLAND *(25 min., color). Produced by Noel Monkman. Available for purchase and rental from the Australian News & Information Bureau, 634 Fifth Ave., New York 20, N. Y.* Beautifully photographed in kodachrome on Australia's remarkable Great Barrier Reef, these three films have the added advantages of being sensibly narrated and well edited. "Marvels in Miniature" is a fascinating microphotographic study of the multicolored diatoms, the tiniest forms of life, so small that a thousand of them can fit on the head of a pin.

"Feathered Fishers" deals with bird life on the islands and shows millions of sea birds in their incessant comings and goings on what looks like an egg-laying Coney Island.

"Coral Wonderland" goes underwater to present an exotic array of the small fish and other marine life inhabiting the coral depths. The startling patterns of existence, no less than the amazing patterns of shapes and colors, make this an absorbing film. An extraordinary sequence on the nesting and hatching of turtle eggs ends the film on a grave and mysterious note.

SUNRISE SERENADES *(30 min., color).* GROUSE OF THE GRASSLANDS *(10 min., color). Produced by Edgar M. Queeny, with the cooperation of the American Museum of Natural History. Distributed for purchase and rental by Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Wilmette, Illinois.* The unique mating ceremonies of three types of grouse are shown here for the first time in a color motion picture. Descending upon the open grasslands at the first show of the pale prairie dawn, each male grouse plots out his own private territory and no other male dare encroach. The camera closes in on the group and shows us the impressive ritual of life which has sustained this bird species and preserved its distinctiveness—the fierce booming sounds which mark the occasion, the absurd strutting dances that serve to attract the females.

"Grouse of the Grasslands" is a short version of "Sunrise Serenades."

THE WEB OF LIFE. *A series of two color films: "The Strands Grow" (15 min.) and "A Strand Breaks" (15 min.). Produced by the Conservation Foundation in collaboration with the New York Zoological Society. Photographed by John Storer. Distributed for purchase and rental by Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Wilmette, Illinois.* The solemn and irrevocable laws of balance in nature are the subject of these two films. "The Strands Grow" shows in a simple, matter-of-fact way how units of plants and animals provide food for each other in the continuous web of life.

"A Strand Breaks" pleads for conservation of nature's resources and reveals the consequences of environmental or other changes which cause one plant or animal to become overdominant, overabundant, and overprosperous in relation to the others in its life-group. The unhappy fact seems to be that to get out of step with nature in this way means almost inevitably the downfall of the species. From the past records of once-dominant animals like the saber-toothed tiger and the dinosaur we can learn that adaptability rather than strength is the virtue that Mother Nature rewards.

"A Strand Breaks" reviews much of the material given in the first film and is the more exciting of the two.

—CECILE STARR.

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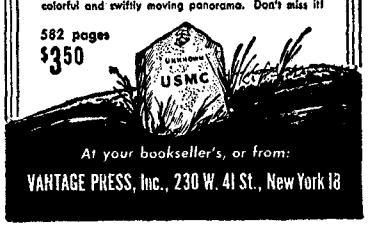

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GIDE'S "PURE NOVEL"

(*Continued from page 13*)

lem of fitting a novel within a novel and even with Edouard's ambidexterity in settling other people's heterosexual love troubles and his own unilinear affairs. But Gide's mouthpiece is better integrated in the story and more lifelike than Philip, the hero of "Point Counterpoint," who has many affinities with him.

There are five or six plots in "The Counterfeiters," impossible to summarize but each contributing in some measure to the three dominant themes which give the book its unifying force. The first is the Devil and his intervention in our lives. Gide is neither his advocate nor his high priest, in spite of some accusations repeatedly leveled at him: he denounces the sly working of the Devil's contrivances in many lives, for that seducer is most potent when he is denied. The second thread running throughout the novel is the delineation of adolescence, in which Gide excelled. The rebellion of Bernard, revolting against the hypocrisy of his bourgeois family, determined to break with all conventions but modest, tender, and tamed and resigned in the end, constitutes a moving novel in itself. Olivier is more tragic but still appealing. The suicide of Boris at the end and the cruel insensitiveness of the other boys who drive their companion to his self-inflicted death are powerfully rendered and worthy of Dostoievsky.

But the youthful counterfeiters, circulating counterfeit gold coins, are also symbolical of the fake values which we all worship. The virtuous characters in the novel are the most hypocritical of all and the dupes of their own hypocrisy. The literary life of Paris is amusingly satirized, as a market for counterfeit and pretentious values. In our professional careers, in our family lives, even in our loves most of us live by inflated or false standards. Many human beings indeed go through life without ever having taken off their masks or realized that they were living under a mask. The central interest of the novel—and of Gide's whole life—is in its message of sincerity. And sincerity is not reached easily or through being spontaneous or coarse or shameless in one's confession even of one's most "original" and unique sins. It requires pitiless self-analysis but no complacency, discrimination between what in ourselves may be secondary or adventitious and what is authentic. Like freedom, sincerity is not given. One has to become sincere and then to know how to remain sincere.

Gide in the eighty years of his life seldom reached greatness. His most ambitious novel will be termed by many a semi-failure. But such failures in attempting the truly difficult and in spurning complacency and repetitiousness and banality are worth far more than most successes. It is an interesting novel if a faulty one, and what important novel was ever free from faults? The message of that immoralist and unbelieving Protestant is expressed in every page; more truth, and more sincere truth toward ourselves, sincerely expressed!

Henri Peyre is professor of French at Yale University. His books include "Writers and Their Critics."

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE FRIGHTENED DOVE *Peter Hardin* (Scribner: $2.50)	Bartoli, former underground leader and American agent, has settled into quiet in New York until old Fascist enemy arrives and lures him to Montreal and mysterious murders.	Clean, lean style; people well understood; exciting, original suggestive theme; suspense gained a bit unfairly by withholding actors' knowledge.	You can really care about this one
THESE ARROWS POINT TO DEATH *William O'Farrell* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce: $2.50)	Beautiful wife pressures Greg Allison into renting family's decaying Tidewater mansion to "gamblers" who turn out to be Nazi devils. T-men double for the Marines.	"Arrows" remain a mystery, but plenty of guns and double-crossed double-crossers. Knack for scene and suspense: hero-detective is nice guy.	O.K. as cocktail

—KATHLEEN SPROUL.

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(Continued on Page 42)

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PERSONALS

(Continued from Page 41)

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SHUTTER SNAPPER would exchange clicks with snappy gals. Box 175-G.

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YOUNG PIANIST, bored, desires correspondence young, sense of humored gal. Box 182-G.

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EDUCATED YOUNG MAN would correspond with charming, mature woman. Box 199-G.

WOMAN! How liberal can you get? Write to Box 200-G.

PERSONALS

MATURE WOMAN, esthetic, professional pianist-teacher, fluent French, seeks interesting summer position. Box 167-G.

MATURE LADY, urbane, fond of life, would correspond with older gentleman. Box 170-G.

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GOVERNESS—COMPANION—TUTOR, Europe, this summer, fluent French, Italian, English. Intend to remain abroad. Box 202-G.

YOUNG MAN WOULD LIKE correspondence with young lady interested in teaching therapy, rural living, horticulture, South America. Box 203-G.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 888

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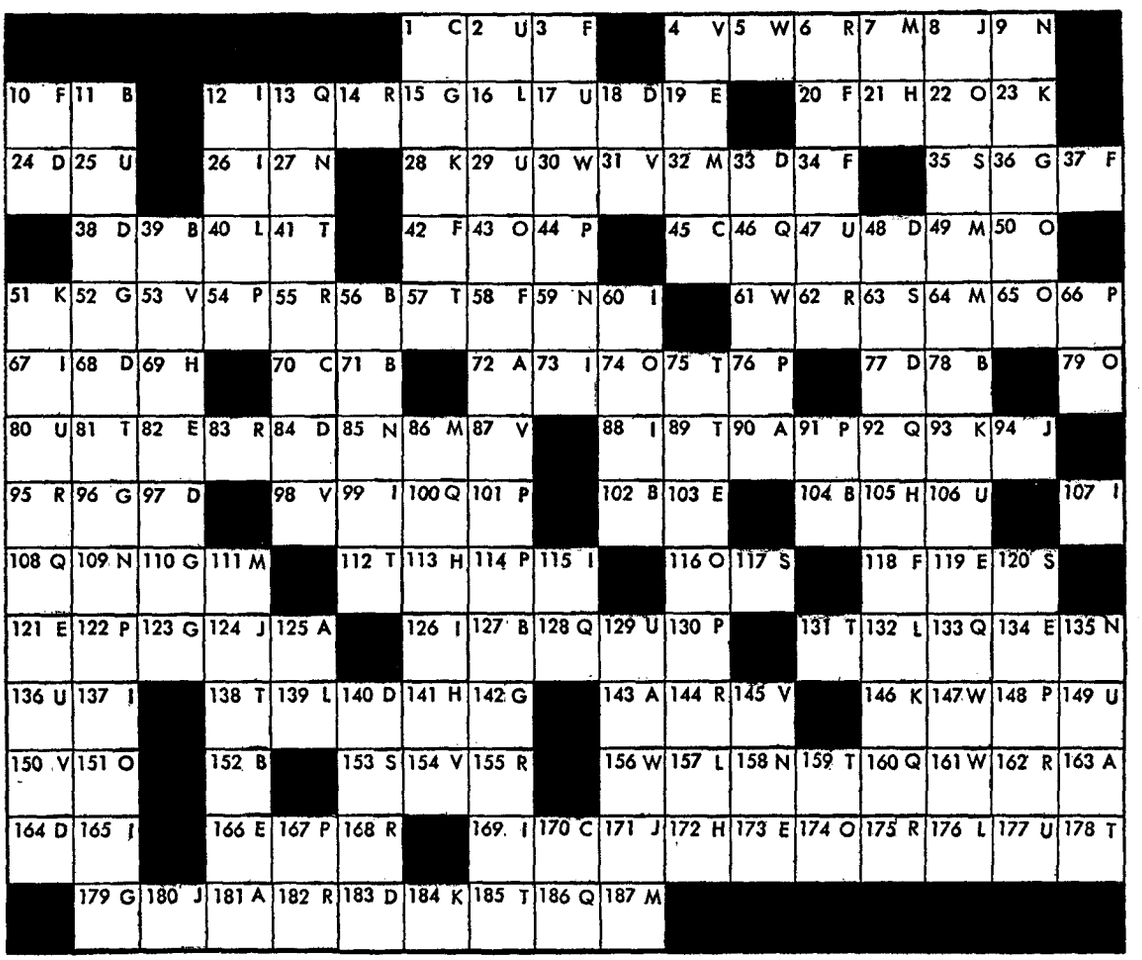
By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Capital of New South Wales, Australia.	90 72 125 181 163 143
B. Distressing (It.; direction in music).	39 71 78 56 11 127 152 104 102
C. Having a projection or curvature in or near the middle (her.).	170 70 45 1
D. Employing every available means of attack or defense (3 wds.).	97 77 140 24 38 18 33 68 164 183 84 48
E. The common European grosbeak.	134 166 121 103 82 19 173 119
F. Matter pulverized by abrasion.	10 42 118 37 58 34 3 20
G. The home; dwelling place (fig.).	123 52 36 179 142 15 110 96
H. A pygmy people of the Belgian Congo.	21 172 105 141 113 69
I. Not to understand (3 wds.; usually preceded by "can").	26 12 126 73 60 107 165 88 169 67 137 99 115
J. To quell; calm; cause to subside.	180 124 8 171 94
K. Grated harshly upon.	93 28 184 51 146 23
L. Poetic name for England.	176 40 139 16 132 157

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
M. Seized or held, as by force or without right.	64 187 32 111 7 86 49
N. To produce imitative words.	27 158 109 59 135 85 9
O. Not arranged in rows (bot.).	74 65 151 22 79 43 116 174 50
P. A Jacobin (comp.; French Revolution).	76 66 167 130 148 54 114 122 91 101 44
Q. Pleasing to the taste; palatable.	133 92 128 108 160 100 46 13 186
P. A Jacobin (comp.; French	6 182 62 14 175 155 144 162 83 168 55 95
S. To invest with a fee or feud (law).	35 120 63 117 153
T. To bear one a grudge (4 wds.; colloq.).	112 138 81 178 89 57 185 131 41 159 75
U. A few times (3 wds.).	25 136 17 106 2 47 177 129 80 29 149
V. Disposed of completely (2 wds.; slang).	98 31 4 150 154 87 145 53
W. To stimulate (physiol.).	5 147 30 156 61 161

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram. When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 15 of this issue.

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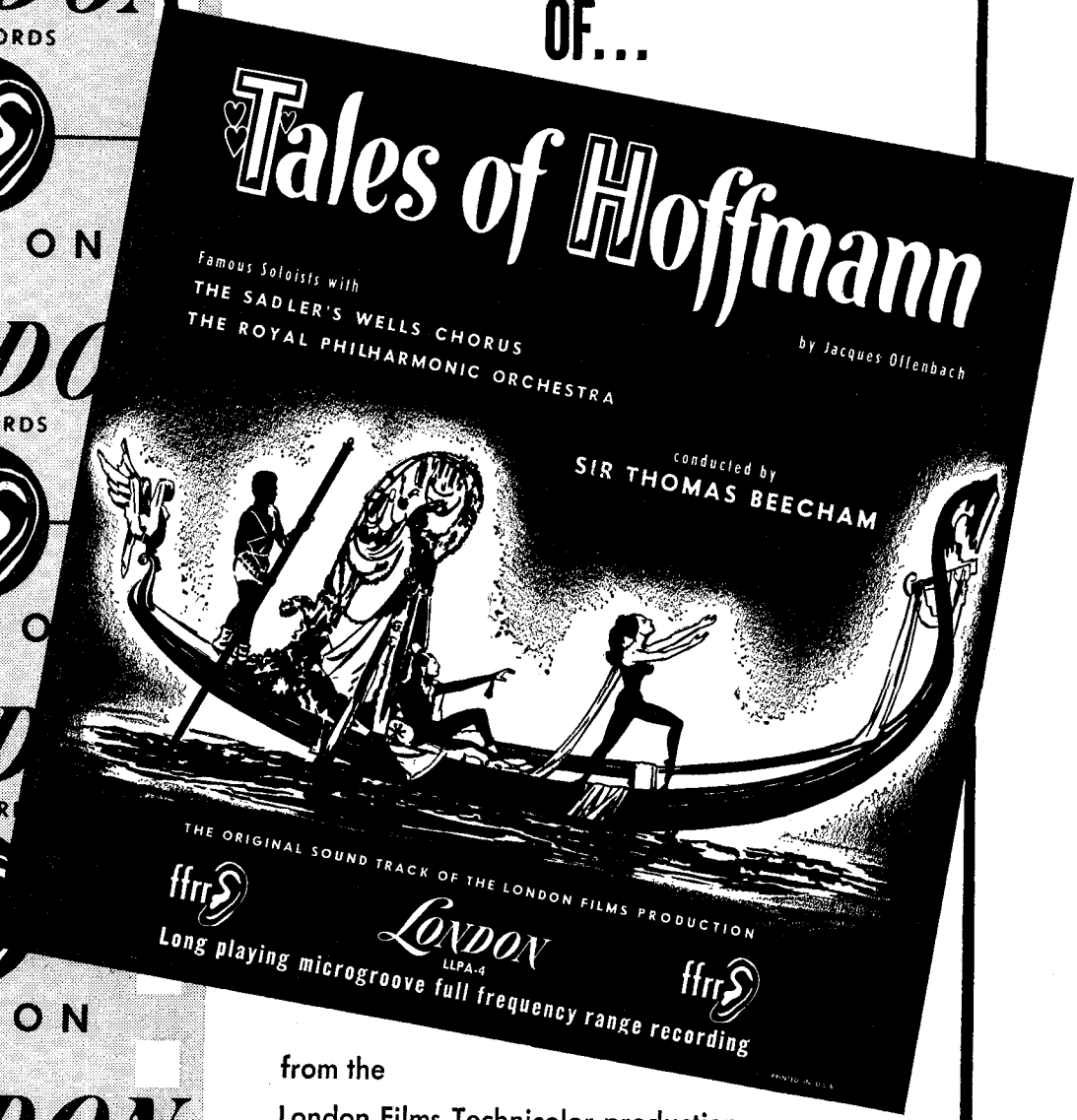

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SRL / RECORDINGS SECTION

HIGHLIGHTS

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The Auvergne of Joseph Canteloube

RENÉ DUMESNIL

René Dumesnil

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The first modern recording of Canteloube's "Songs of the Auvergne"* (*see page 57*) *has stimulated a new curiosity about the background and origin of these remarkable expressions. René Dumesnil, music critic of* Le Monde *and author of several books on contemporary music, has obliged* RECORDINGS *with the accompanying article—the most informative on this subject we have encountered.*

YOU HAVE only to pronounce the word Auvergne to musicians or merely evoke the old Celtic province by naming Vercingetorix, its Gaulish chieftain who battled the legions of Julius Caesar, and you will hear the name of Joseph Canteloube respond like an echo. More than any French composer, Canteloube has best known how to express in his works the profound soul of Auvergne, that province where he has such strong roots and where lived his ancestors. His music is like those fruits that owe their savor to the soil from which they spring. One has only to listen to his "Chants d'Auvergne" to feel this native tang. It is a subtle and intoxicating flavor, doubtless because it is made up of one of the rarest things in the world—the distant memory of a time long past. That is what these songs reflect, that and the very climate and physical aspect of the region.

For the highlanders of the Auvergne still retain many characteristics of their ancestors; centuries of civilization have passed over their race without softening it. They are a rugged people, a peasant people, firmly entrenched upon a granitic soil that bristles with the rounded domes and empty craters of volcanoes long extinct. The climate is compounded of contrasts. During winter's early months the air is dry and keen, the land snow-clad, then comes a rainy spring, and after that a summer of intense heat. A fertile plain lies to the northwest; a wild dismantled plateau—the Cantal—is to the south. It is a country that for long was poor, where people meagerly survived by breeding goats and trading their cheeses and livestock. The abundant hot springs have now, however, brought wealth to the Auvergne by developing its tourist trade. But only a little beyond Vichy or Royat it is possible to find again the Auvergne of olden times. And there the very monuments —the pagan temples and the cathedrals and basilicas of later times, among the most beautiful examples anywhere of Romanesque churches—express the patience and tenacity of this ancient race, which kept in check so long the conquering Romans, express it with the hard, volcanic building stone employed, one of the most resistant to the sculptor's chisel yet knowingly and elaborately worked.

Joseph Canteloube de Malaret was born October 21, 1879, in the Ardèche region where the eastern slopes of the Cévennes mountains drain into the Rhone. His father was an Auvergnat, his mother a native of these "cévenole" mountains. Such an origin perhaps is enough to explain the closeness of his art to that of his compatriot, Vincent d'Indy, whose "Symphonie cévenole, sur un thème montagnard" is one of the most beautiful productions of French music. Canteloube's music, like that of Vincent d'Indy, is nourished with the vigor of the people. He was lulled in his infancy by the old traditional songs, handed down from father to son, sung during the long winter nights, was familiar from his childhood with the round-dances of the feast days—for example, the bourrée, one of the oldest of French dances—and with the airs of the reed pipe, plaintive, nostalgic, which the shepherds play in the solitude of the volcanic mountains.

But it was by a roundabout way that Joseph Canteloube came to the composition of music. At the age of four and a half they seated him at a piano. As first teacher he had Mademoiselle Daetzer, a friend of Chopin who interested herself in the child's talents. But then he entered the lycée and, once possessed of his diploma, he secured employment in a Bordeaux bank. He might have remained there

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the rest of his life had not an illness of his mother called him back to Malaret, his home in the confines of the Cantal. Upon breathing again the familial atmosphere his childhood memories returned. Music once more seized upon him, and he thoroughly resolved that never again would he add up figures in a bank. He resumed his study of composition, then perfected and completed his musical studies at the Schola Cantorum under Vincent d'Indy and Charles Bordes. During this period he formed friendships with Déodat de Severac and Albeñiz. Though he soon had penetrated the mysteries of counterpoint, he was in no great haste to produce. The people of Auvergne are patient; they never gather fruit until it is ripe, and Canteloube waited for his talent to mature before confronting the judgment of the public.

HE was not long in conquering that public. In 1907 a "Suite pour piano et violon" and two years later "Eglogue d'automne" for voice and orchestra drew attention to this young man whose thoughtful face, deep-set eyes, lean, slender, agile body gave him the look more of a cavalry officer or a gentleman farmer than of an artist as usually imagined. With "L'Arada" ("The Earth," in Languedoc), a cycle of songs produced immediately after World War I, he had clearly won success, a success confirmed in that same year (1919) by the "Préludes du Mas," which was played at the Colonne concerts. Canteloube dedicated himself to the realization of one of his dreams when he undertook a lyric work glorifying his native province—an opera entitled "Le Mas," which in Languedoc means the ancestral home, or "manor" as it is called by the people to the north of the Loire. In this lyric drama it is the home that is the central protagonist, one might say, while the earth—the seasons, the ploughing, sowing, and reaping—provides the episodes. It is the earth that sings from one end to the other of the three acts of this opera, which earned for its composer the Heugel prize and was produced with signal success at the Opéra on March 27, 1929. Canteloube himself wrote the libretto—a simple and rustic tale, according well with a musical score that abounds in popular themes.

Five years passed between the time when Canteloube had drawn the last double bar of this work and the day of its presentation at the Opéra. In the interval his "Chants d'Auvergne" had brought him celebrity.

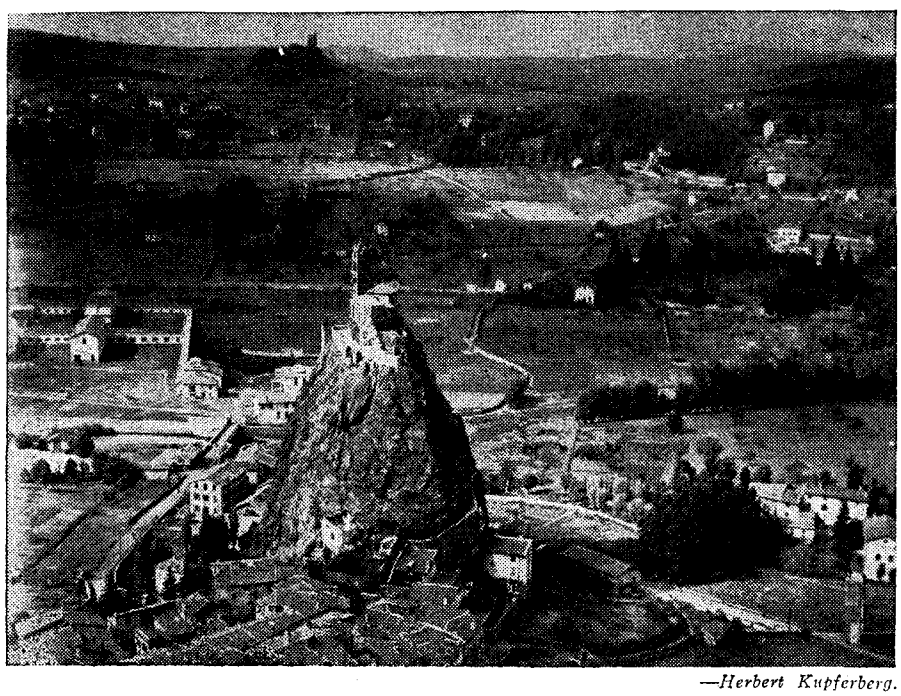
They comprise four series. The first, composed in Paris from January to April 1923, were sung by Mme. Malnory-Marseillac under the direction of Gabriel Pierné at the Colonne concerts. The second, written at Céret that same year, was first sung at the Lamoureux concerts by Hilda Roosevelt under the direction of Paul Paray on November 9, 1924. The third, which Canteloube brought back from a vacation at Saint-Palais, where he had stayed from May to September 1927, had Madeleine Grey as interpreter, Rhené-Baton directing, and was presented to the public at the Pasdeloup concerts in October of that year. The fourth, also sung by Madeleine Grey, was first heard by the public—thanks to Pierre Monteux—in October 1930 at the concerts of l'Orchestre Symphonique de Paris. Since then these "Chants d'Auvergne" have often reappeared on concert programs not only in Paris but throughout Europe.

There are two principal categories of folk songs in Auvergne: the "great" —called "grandes"—and the dance songs. The first are very slow and simple recitatives, which the field laborers chant as they lead their teams of oxen. The tempo of these songs is that of draught animals walking. In the "Chants d'Auvergne" the one entitled "Passo pel prat" ("Come by the field") is a laborer's song, a "great." Again, the "Bailero" ("Shepherd's Song") is a dialogue of shepherds. The composer noted down its theme one summer evening at twilight when, in the environs of Vic-sur-Cère in Cantal, he heard a young shepherdess singing on a mountain peak (a *puy* as they call it) and a shepherd responding to it from another summit.

The other category of songs—for the dance—is composed on the rhythm of the bourée, the Auvergne dance in ¾ time. Examples of these are "L'aio de rotso" ("Water from the spring"), "Ound' onoren gordal?" ("Where shall we stay?"), and "Obal din lou Limouzi" ("Down in Limousin"). They are accompanied by a bagpipe made of goat skin—hence the local name of *cabretto* applied to the instrument. The bourées are linked together during the dance without interruption by a kind of improvisation on the part of the bagpipe player, thus allowing the dancers to rest a moment and form new couples. In his orchestration Canteloube has given the oboe and the clarinet the parts of the bagpipe player, since the sonorities of all three instruments are similar.

To what do these songs owe their unqualified success? Without a doubt, to their sincerity. Never has music been written more pure, more sane, more close to nature. But do not be deceived: this sincerity and purity of accent do not preclude—far from it—the patient work of the artist. It is true that some of the themes were directly noted down in the Auvergne region by J. Canteloube. But it is still more from himself that he drew the substance of his music. The old peasant dances furnished him his inspiration, as they furnished Vincent d'Indy the basis of his "Symphonie cévenole." But the beauty of these songs owes just as much to Canteloube's warm and colorful orchestrations, so picturesque both as to choice of instrumental timbre and to the clever mingling of sonorities.

Canteloube de Malaret has remained in this machine age a true product of old France, a man who can recapture without doing violence to his nature a personality close to that



—Herbert Kupferberg.

Auvergne vista (the town of Le Puy in foreground) — "a granitic soil that bristles with the rounded domes and empty craters of volcanoes long extinct."

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of the shepherds of his native province. There is in him something that recalls the Virgil of the "Eglogues" and the "Georgics"—which is to say that he is an artist of refinement, in love with nature and the earth, yet able to translate these things into poetry.

On June 20, 1933, Canteloube presented at the Opéra another lyric drama, this time with a libretto by Etienne Clémentel, also a native of Auvergne. The title of the work, "Vercingétorix," sufficiently explains its tendencies. Again, we have a song to the glory of Auvergne and its leader who headed the revolt of Gaul against Julius Caesar.

The success of the "Chants d'Auvergne" impelled French Columbia to record several of them with Madeleine Grey and an orchestra under the direction of Elie Cohen. To this recording Mme. Grey was to owe one of the most marked successes of her career. She sang the songs in many of Europe's musical capitals, and from all quarters came praise for her singularly expressive interpretation. The timbre and quality of her voice was particularly suited to these songs, which demand not only power but still more a vocal flexibility capable of bringing out color and nuance. In fact, Madeleine Grey enjoyed with these songs a success comparable to that which greeted her interpretation of Ravel's "Hebraic Songs."

It is not only by his music that Joseph Canteloube has rendered useful service towards the renaissance of the folk song. Three years ago he published a remarkable volume, "The Songs of the French Provinces," illustrated with musical examples and reproductions of paintings. These illustrations demonstrate well how unified are the arts of this country, how painters and musicians alike draw their inspiration from one and the same source. We can think of no better way of ending than by quoting the conclusion of this volume:

> The art of France [writes Canteloube] has always struck its roots deeply into good native soil. In returning to the inspiration of the folk song, which was its ancestor, French music does no more than return to its origins, finding at this source a new and vigorous youth. In this we are but following the magnificent and salutary example of the Spanish and Russian schools of music.

It may be said that Joseph Canteloube's music rightly takes its place beside the Spanish and Russian works to which he refers. It possesses the ingredients of an appeal both wide and enduring.

The translation of the above article was made by Herma Briffault.

Apropos of Couperin

WANDA LANDOWSKA

A RECENTLY published book by Wilfrid Mellers, "François Couperin and the French Classical Tradition,"* awakens in me distant memories, memories that move me deeply. It was at the beginning of this century. No one cared about Couperin, no more than about Rameau, Clérambault, Lalande, or Mouret. The harpsichord itself was disdained. Indeed, the first attempts to revive it, in Paris, did more harm than good: Louis Diémer (1843-1919), excellent musician, teacher of many famous French pianists, saw nothing in the harpsichord but a pretext to peck out "La Poule" by Rameau or the plaintive third—always played too fast—of Daquin's "Coucou." The musicians who heard Diémer's harpsichord—a modern reconstruction—found its tone thin and poor. Even the lovers of music of the past were deceived. Could this be the instrument that inspired Couperin and Bach and the eulogies of writers throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries?

There appears a young Maître de Chapelle, Charles Bordes, who founds in 1892 the Chanteurs de St.-Gervais — St.-Gervais, the church that symbolizes the history of the whole Couperin family. Four years later, with d'Indy and Guilmant, Bordes founds the Schola Cantorum. In an atmosphere of fervent dedication the musical masterpieces of the past, ignored and forgotten, are presented. Albert Schweitzer and Guilmant are at the organ. In the audience we meet the leading musicologists and musicians of the day.

I took part very often in those concerts, playing Chambonnières, Louis and François Couperin, Rameau and Bach. But—believe it or not—I played them on a modern piano. For the hostility towards the harpsichord persisted, even while the renaissance of old music was growing at the Schola Cantorum. To overthrow it meant years of struggle.

Charles Bordes had a passionate love for Couperin's music. I shall never forget his delight in playing for me "Les Amusemens." This was his favorite. I would answer with "Les Sylvains." The same flowing melodic line close to the bass, in the low register, sweet, grave, and sensual. Bordes traced in Couperin echoes of the French folk songs he adored. He dreamed of a setting in the country for a Théâtre de Verdure. I remember a Folk Song Congress at Montpellier. Nearby was an exquisite small château with a garden *à la française*. Bordes revived here the "Orphée" of Clérambault. During the entr'actes he placed at each corner of the square lawn some country musicians who twanged away on the oboe and bagpipe. But see how I digress! Digress? No. The four peasants played "La Muséte de Taverni" by Couperin. Not in a concert hall, but in the open air, in the midst of a rural landscape close to a garden inspired by Le Nôtre.

This unforgettable image that I have tried to evoke of Clérambault's "Orphée," bathed in light and transparent, brings us to consider the chapter on "Values and Standards in the Grand Siècle" in Wilfrid Mellers's book. Here he explains in an understanding manner why the romantics could not accept this lightness, this clarity. "The romantics," he observes, "loved shadowy corners and regarded order as suspect." Mellers well illuminates the background and atmosphere in which Couperin lived and worked. Whatever he writes about the lute and its influence on the harpsichord is worth study. In general he has written a valuable book.

But some questions—vital to an understanding of Couperin—remain obscure. First of all, let us see how Couperin and his contemporaries faced the question of taste. Couperin takes infinite pains to explain his ornaments, fingering, phrasing, the signs, the *notes inégales*, etc. He is meticulous and authoritative. (Bach also. In his fear of being misunderstood he went so far as to write out his ornaments in notes. The most revealing example is the second movement of the "Italian Concerto." Cf. my "Musique Ancienne," Paris, 1909.) Couperin offers directions that a careful interpreter tries to follow as closely as possible. But when the explanations are exhausted Couperin appeals to taste, to *le goût*: the final arbiter, a sort of

*FRANCOIS COUPERIN AND THE FRENCH CLASSICAL TRADITION. By Wilfrid Mellers. New York: Roy Publishers. 412 pp. $6.

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deus ex machina. In his "Rossignol en Amour" we have some particulars. "Slowly and very tenderly, although measured," writes Couperin at the head. Here we are assured. But in the *Double* (the variation that follows) Couperin says: "One should not pay too strict attention to the tempo in this *Double*. It is necessary to sacrifice all to *taste*." Here, once again, this famous *goût* intervenes.

WHAT is this *goût* that Couperin, St.-Lambert, Rousseau, and many others never tire of mentioning? Mellers quotes them, but no one explains.

"Bad taste"—we imagine we know what that is. We also say "perfect taste," which means that the interpreter possesses this discrimination—gift of heaven—that tells him what he has to do or avoid. We even have "perfect bad taste"—that which nothing in the world can prevent an interpreter from exposing and pouring forth. But what is this "good taste"? Is there a standard? What is good taste to one is bad taste to another. This becomes clear in dealing with pupils of different natures and training. And also in launching records into the world. Where I find a rubato called for a listener says: "Mme. Landowska takes inadmissible liberties." When I feel that sentimental displays must be avoided, another objects: "How cold! I should like more feeling."

I wonder if Couperin and his contemporaries were not searching in vain to explain the inexplicable, that *je ne sais quoi*, that unforeseen, that something that depends on a moment of inspiration in the interpreter. This good taste, what is it if not liberties upon rules strictly established and observed?

There are other points to be clarified. Mellers says: ". . . we know that Couperin had a long correspondence about musical matters with Bach," quoting Bouvet's book, which he later refers to as "the largely hypothetical biography of Bouvet." How can Mellers affirm "we know" when Bouvet himself is not sure of this apocryphal story? Mellers should not make our mouth water.

And now, Couperin's harpsichord. The musician who reads Mellers's description of the harpsichord called for by Couperin's music remains confused. "Couperin calls for a full-sized two-manual harpsichord," Mellers writes. And later we read: "Some pieces such as 'La Passacaille' and 'La Lugubre' need tremendous sonorous resources, and can be adequately realized only on a very large instrument." True, but this contradicts the "with two sets of strings" that Mellers adds to his first sentence. Two sets of strings could never constitute "tremendous sonorous resources." On the following page Mellers says: "Couperin's harpsichord probably had one four-foot and two eight-foot stops." Which makes *three* not two sets of strings. The four foot is not merely "probable," for Couperin mentions it apropos of "Les Bagatelles."

Mellers proceeds: ". . . and certainly no sixteen foot. Couperin would have considered the din of the sixteen-foot stop quite intolerable." It is risky to affirm with such certitude that Couperin's harpsichord did not possess the sixteen-foot strings. Harpsichords with the sixteen foot were rarer than those without, but they did exist. The Heyer Museum, now in Leipzig, possesses a Perticis harpsichord with sixteen foot dated 1683; another one made by Christophoris in 1726 also has a sixteen foot. The Steinert Collection, now in Holyoke, Mass., possesses a harpsichord by J. A. Hass made in 1710 that has a sixteen foot.

The "tremendous sonorous resources" and "the varied orchestral registration of the fully-developed clavecin essential for all Couperin's representative music," as Mellers requires, demands the sixteen foot. In saying sixteen foot one thinks primarily of the reinforcement of sonority, of tutti. But now consider the sixteen foot in itself, not as a reinforcement. Its impasto—rich, somewhat subdued — is magnificent. In writing for two voices, which Couperin loves to do, the sixteen foot, sometimes played an octave higher, has a beauty that no other register can bestow.

Reading Mellers's "Couperin" I wondered if it could have been written at the beginning of this century? Certainly it could, except for the pages about recordings, which were then in their infancy. Yes, Mellers might have given us his "Couperin" just as Ecorcheville gave us his "Corneille et la Musique" and "De Lulli à Rameau" (1906), as Quittard his "Dumont" (1906) and his admirable work on Louis Couperin and Antoine Francisque, Expert his edition of "Les Maîtres musiciens de la Renaissance Française," La Laurencie his "Le goût musical en France" (1905) and his "Rameau," Cucuel his "La Pouplinière et la Musique de chambre au XVIIIe siècle" (1913), Guilmant and Pirro their "Les Archives des Maîtres de l'orgue," Schweitzer and Pirro their works on Bach, and the volumes on Couperin by Tessier, Tiersot, and Bouvet, to mention a few.

—*André Meyer collection.*

François Couperin: "It is necessary to sacrifice all to taste."

But, you see, at the beginning of this century hardly anyone but musicologists read these remarkable works. Modestly the authors went their way, preparing the ground. The hard struggle to give the harpsichord the place it deserved ended in victory. Thus, today the extraordinary extent of the interest in old music and in the harpsichord has increased—in a magnificent way—throughout the world the number of readers for a book such as Mellers's "Couperin."

Contemporary French musicologists continue to enrich the bibliography: Renée Viollier, my pupil, with her "Mouret"; Norbert Dufourcq, with his "Bach, le Maître de l'Orgue" and "Le Clavecin" (the latter including a marvelous chapter on Couperin); Yvonne Rokseth, with her work on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century music; Claude Crussard (lamented leader of the Ars Rediviva ensemble), with her "Marc-Antoine Charpentier"; and, of course, Marc Pincherle, with his remarkable "Corelli" and "Vivaldi."

So, Wilfrid Mellers is in good company. His "Couperin," the homage of an Englishman to an illustrious French master, can only be welcome.

Operas on LP

A FRESHET of operas on LP discs is promised for release this fall by RCA Victor. New to the catalogue will be Verdi's "Traviata" as conducted by Toscanini (the broadcast performance of 1946); Bizet's "Carmen" in a studio performance conducted by Fritz Reiner, with Risë Stevens and Jussi Bjoerling; and the long-awaited "Pelléas et Melisande" conducted by Désormière.

Also scheduled for fall release are LP dubbings of many old favorites from the RCA catalogue: the Glyndebourne "Don Giovanni" and "Figaro," Beecham's "Zauberflöte" and "Faust," the Dresden Act III of "Meistersinger," and the Vienna Act I of "Walküre."

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Operatic Miscellany

HERBERT WEINSTOCK

MONTEVERDI: *"Orfeo." Max Meili (Orfeo), Elfriede Troetschel (Euridice), and others, with the vocal ensemble and chamber orchestra of the Berlin Radio, conducted by Helmut Koch.* (Vox LP set 6440, $18.80.)

MONTEVERDI: *"Tirsi e Clori," Iro's Air from "Il Ritorno d'Ulisse," and "Tempro la Cetra." Max Meili, Elsa Scherz-Meister, ensemble of voices and ancient instruments of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, directed by August Weinzinger.* (Concert Hall Society LP 1085, $5.95.)

PUCCINI: *"Suor Angelica." Fernando Previtali conducting the orchestra and chorus of Radio Italiana, with a cast including Rosanna Carteri (Suor Angelica).* (Cetra-Soria LP 50.030, $5.95.)

PERGOLESI (arr. Arnold Schering): *"The Musick Master." Soloists and instrumentalists of "Intimate Opera."* (London LP 291, $5.95.)

ARNE: *"Thomas and Sally";* also PURCELL: *"Masque in 'Timon of Athens'"* (*both arr. Frederick Woodhouse*). *Soloists, instrumentalists of "Intimate Opera."* (London LP 292, $5.95.)

CAREY: *"True Blue, or The Press Gang" (arr. Geoffrey Dunn);* ANONYMOUS: *"The Dustcart Cantata" (arr. Frederick Woodhouse);* HOOK: *"The Musical Courtship" (arr. Woodhouse). Soloists, instrumentalists of "Intimate Opera."* (London LP 293, $4.95.)

TWO THOUSAND YEARS OF MUSIC. *Compiled and arranged by Curt Sachs.* (Decca LP album DX 106, $11.70.)

MONTEVERDI'S "Orfeo" has reached the astonishing age (for an opera) of 347 years. It has had several recent performances, and has been recorded more or less completely at least three times. As the first adaptation to full-bodied musical purpose of a form not one decade old when it was composed, "Orfeo" has always been of special interest to historians of music, musicologists, and students of Italian civilization. Performed by first-rate singers under the direction of a scrupulous and well-informed conductor, this "fable in music" can scarcely fail to produce a stirring effect. To the average unspecialized modern ear certain sections of its five acts—and most particularly Orfeo's third-act apostrophe, "Possente Spirto"—sound amazingly vivid and persuasive. But other whole areas of the score, their very relevance and musical diction lost to living music—and to be relearned only by study and long familiarization—sound dull, repetitive, and sometimes infuriating.

As a document for study the Vox-Discophiles Français recording of "Orfeo" will serve; as a living recreation of Monteverdi's score for pleasurable listening it will not. Max Meili, for decades a specialist in older music, unquestionably knows how to sing the role of Orfeo. The simple fact, however, is that he does not here produce pleasant (or, at times, even bearable) sounds. Some of the other voices are better, but none of them is better than adequate. The recording itself is indifferent in texture and seems awkwardly spliced. Some of its flaws suggest that it is a tampered-with version of a "live" radio performance. The album contains the complete libretto in Italian and Ellen A. Lebow's excellent English translation, which was (if memory serves correctly) originally intended to accompany the old Italian recording of "Orfeo," available at one time on Italian HMV. All that is lacking here is high quality, musical and technical, of performance.

Unfortunately for Monteverdi and us, the Concert Hall Society release of a single LP containing "Tirsi e Clori," Iro's air from "Il Ritorno d'Ulisse," and the concerto for tenor and strings beginning "Tempro la cetra" is no better than the "Orfeo." Again Max Meili's pinched, uncertain voice dominates to the music's detriment. Listening to these pieces as here presented might be compared fairly, I think, to examining a poorly lighted collection of old paintings: we do not get everything, and what we do get is difficult to determine or evaluate. Neither this recording nor the "Orfeo" would convince anyone that Claudio Monteverdi not only was but is a great composer. Concert Hall Society gives us the Italian texts without English translation.

Rosanna Carteri — "an intense, beautifully sung, and credible portrayal."

CONTRARILY, Puccini's "Suor Angelica" is presented by Cetra-Soria in a recorded version in which almost every detail is right. The performance is impeccably in the required style; it has been recorded with lifelike clarity and vibrancy. As the tragic nun whose sin of love is forgiven by the Virgin, Rosanna Carteri gives an intense, beautifully sung, and credible portrayal. The prevailing excellence of the other sopranos, mezzo-sopranos, and single contralto goes far to make up for the monotony of an opera in which no male voice is heard. Fernando Previtali conducts with life-giving sympathy. The recording belongs technically among today's best. Forzano's Italian libretto and a passable English translation are included in easily readable form. For Puccinians, then, a great event. (And may Monteverdi some day receive this splendid sort of recorded treatment!)

For more than twenty years "Intimate Opera," an organization started by Frederick Woodhouse, has been providing England with performances of the kind of arranged and adapted operalets listed above under Pergolesi, Arne, and Carey. Its leading singers, at least in these three records, are Mr. Woodhouse, Keturah Sorrell, Stephen Manton, and Leyland White. Accompaniment is supplied by a small instrumental ensemble: two violins, viola, cello, and harpsichord, or some slightly varying similar group. The original purpose of "Intimate Opera" was to revive unknown chamber operas. On the evidence of the present example the operas are not so much revived as transformed. The English diction is expert, though not always easy on American ears; the background accompaniment is nearly always charming; and the spirit is willing. But the work-to-work similarity, suggesting Gilbert and Sullivan and tending to monotony, can only be the result of the arranging and adapting efforts that Messrs. Woodhouse,

(*Continued on page 65*)

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A Haydn Discography

C. G. BURKE

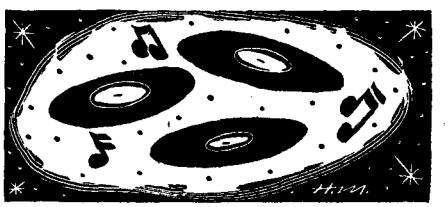
DURING the last two years more works by Haydn have been recorded than were made throughout the entire previous existence of the phonograph. The LP repertory alone (most of the Haydn works being confined to microgrooves) exceeds the 78 accumulation of fifty preceding years. Ninety-three works requiring 109 LP sides have at this writing been issued in 105 editions employing 129 sides. This is about thirty-five hours of unrepeated Haydn, the equivalent of 250 double-sided twelve-inch 78-rpm discs. The Beethoven Centennial produced no such outpouring of Beethoven, nor the Schubert Centennial of Schubert. A Haydn festival would not be expected to lavish this profusion in our country, which knows less of Haydn than of any of the greatest composers save Handel. And if we are benefiting from a memorial to Haydn's genius, it is informal, spontaneous, unannounced, and unrelated to any particularly significant date in his life.

Yet we have the records, with more to appear. Unballyhooed, unsensational, their absorption by that most critical section of the musical public which buys records has been a continuous surprise. During a creative life of fifty years Haydn wrote an irresistible music, which in mobile performance a century and a half later delights Americans by the freshness of its idiom and the scope of its imagination. An official of the Haydn Society thinks that sentiment for a Haydn revival was "in the air" before the occurrence; but the aërial indications were certainly not overpowering, and it took a very good nose to scent them.

Perhaps we should credit possession of such a nose to the Haydn Society, for whether they actually sensed a latent unappeasable Haydn appetite, they acted as if they did. Rather than conclude, however, that the Society's enterprise proceeds from qualifications more highly developed in a good coon-hound, collectors would do well to acknowledge the imagination, energy, courage, perseverence, and scholarship that initiated the Haydn Society and have maintained its unique position.

This organization has recorded nearly half of the Haydn repertory and nearly half of the Haydn LP discs. Of forty-two recorded symphonies the Haydn Society is responsible for twenty-five. None but the Haydn Society has recorded a Haydn mass: they have recorded three. [EDITOR'S NOTE: A recording by Vox of the "Theresienmesse" has just been announced.] Complete versions of the "Creation" and the "Seasons" exist only on the Society's records. An item less potential of intoxicating commercial success than a Haydn opera cannot be imagined, but the Haydn Society has recorded Haydn's "Orfeo."

Such a history of accomplishment would suffice to establish the producers as musical and phonographic crusaders of high importance; but the



Haydn Society's recordings result from preliminary labors of a kind never before associated with the phonograph industry. The Society undertook no less a task than the establishment of an authentic complete edition of the composer's works, based on examination and comparison of autographs, parts, scores printed in different editions, and emendations, so that every record issued would not only reflect Haydn's intentions for performance, but would probably differ in details of instrumentation, phrasing, and even notation from any corresponding record previously issued. A scholarly lust for clarity and exactitude has governed the Society's policies, and this intrusion of scholarship into a phonographic world which has endured so long with so little dependence on it has already provoked some commendable imitation and may eventually raise the phonograph's ambiguous repute to the level of critical esteem which its achievements warrant.

The Haydn Society is a baby just two years old. Founded in 1949 in Boston, it has managed an almost incredible accomplishment in so short an infancy. It is composed of a nice combination of young American enthusiasts for Haydn and mature European musicologists with a specialized background in the composer's work, assuring a highly satisfactory amalgam of impetuous initiative and scholarly supervision. The dominant spirit and secretary general is H. C. Robbins Landon, whose advisory board includes among others such savants as Jens Peter Larsen, Carl Maria Brand, Otto Erich Deutsch, Carleton Sprague Smith, Oliver Strunk, and the Haydn biographer Karl Geiringer, now a Bostonian like Landon.

The Society has assigned to itself the dual function of issuing the first printed edition of the complete works of Haydn and recording for the phonograph as many Haydn works as the public's capacity will absorb. The preparation of a complete edition is a formidable task once undertaken and discontinued by Breitkopf and Härtel and now reassumed from the beginning by an international group of editors under Jens Peter Larsen's direction. In its researches the Society has not only been able to correct scores erroneously printed or compiled and so played for a hundred years, to create complete scores from orchestral parts unearthed all over Europe, and to amend scores by Haydn's own later alterations, but it has actually discovered the scores or the parts of works believed irrevocably lost. Publication will extend over a number of years, with six volumes scheduled to appear annually.

All the Society's discs have been recorded in exact conformance with the composer's final instrumentation where that is known. Where doubt exists concerning the strength of the the string body, strength known to have been employed for a similar work of the same period is used. This procedure of following a precedent established by the composer himself carries its own justification, although it is not necessarily the best procedure. By accepting the authority of the creator, interminable controversy is obviated; for while certain Haydn symphonies—Nos. 48, 82, 86, 92, 97, 100, 103, and 104, for example—unquestionably sound best in performance by large orchestras, the intimate design of many would be hurt by massive choirs.

The annotations accompanying the Society's records are worth praise on their own account. They are literate, informative, and pertinent, in brave contravention of an ancient tradition.

THE discography that follows in this and the next issue of RECORDINGS includes all LP records issued up to press time. Where a disc is occupied by two or more works the additional titles are supplied in parentheses and described in their proper sequence. Part One of the discography, published this month, is devoted to releases of the Haydn Society. Part Two, to appear next month, deals with Haydn repertory from other companies.

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PART ONE

Chamber Music

NOCTURNES FOR FERDINAND IV OF NAPLES, Nos. 1, 2, 4 & 7. HSLP-1023. Franz Litschauer and Members of the Vienna Chamber Orchestra. Assuredly the only laudatory act of this repellent Spanish-Bourbon despot who ruled the Two Sicilies intermittently was his commissioning some work from Haydn, among them the Nocturnes recorded here from a new edition collected from manuscripts by Dr. Ernst Schmid for the Haydn Society. The pieces resemble divertimentos with a greater extension of mood and a symphonic undercurrent. They are compact, resourceful, and insinuating; and as played on this disc with discriminating finesse in a flawless recording, delectable and essential.

Concertos

FOR HARPSICHORD, IN G. (Concerto for Violin No. 2.) HSLP-1014. Erna Heiller; Anton Heiller and the Collegium Musicum, Vienna. It is still a harpsichord despite the Italian "cembalo" of the label. This is a frivolous work with a rather dull allegro, a pleasant adagio, and a cheerful rondo, the quality of the first underlined by the conductor's complacency. The solo harpsichord is much too weak in an otherwise robust and satisfactory recording.

FOR HORN, IN D. (Concerto for Trumpet.) Vienna Symphony Orchestra. Announced, but not received at press time.

FOR TRUMPET, IN E FLAT. (Concerto for Horn.) Orchestra of the Vienna National Opera. The record has not been heard, but the work is a brilliant entertainment.

FOR VIOLIN, NO. 2, IN G. (Concerto for Harpsichord in G.) HSLP-1014. Edith Bertschinger; Anton Heiller and the Collegium Musicum, Vienna. Deft and courtly music, with an eloquent adagio suggestive of a well-fed Bach, agreeably played and faithfully recorded.

FOR VIOLIN, NO. 3 (or 4), IN A, "MELK". HSLP-1017. (10-inch.) Edith Bertschinger; Anton Heiller and the Collegium Musicum, Vienna. We know this biggest and best of the Haydn violin concertos through the efforts of Anton Heiller and the Haydn Society, who discovered the lost parts and assembled them into a score. The smooth recording recreates a performance by soloist and orchestra admirable in its avoidance of unnecessary display.

Masses

MISSA CELLENSIS IN C, "MARIAZELLER-MESSE." HSLP-2011. Akademie Chorus and Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Gillesberger. The lively nature of the devout Haydn's devotion splendidly expressed in an exuberant re-creation. (When Haydn wrote a mass he looked to the condition of his drums and trumpets.) The performers are adept in the work, including the soloists, drawn from the chorus—although two are not endowed with beautiful voices. Recording of the orchestra is excellent, of the chorus pretty good. The soloists in concert now and then contrive an unpleasant alien bleating.

MISSA SOLEMNIS IN D MINOR, "NELSON MASS." HSLP-2004. Akademie Chorus and Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. Perhaps the best of the Haydn masses, this edition has had the greatest success of any work issued by the Haydn Society. Thus the appeal of the music itself overrides the detriment of mediocre—intermittently bad—recording and dispassionate direction. The gracious singing of two women, Lisa della Casa and Elisabeth Höngen, may have had influence in the success of this brave failure.

MISSA IN TEMPORE BELLI, IN C, "DRUM-MASS." HSLP-2021. Akademie Chorus, and Orchestra of the Vienna National Opera conducted by Hans Gillesberger. This wonderful polyphonic affirmation was written fourteen years after the "Mariazell" Mass and recorded a year later than that work. In both cases the elapsed time produced improvement. The faults dutifully noted in the recording of the "Mariazell" are not in this "Wartime" Mass whose issuance alone would have justified the existence of the Haydn Society.

MISSA SANCTAE CAECILIAE, IN C. Akademie Chorus and Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Gillesberger. Announced but not received at press time.

Operas

ORFEO ED EURIDICE. HSLP-2029. (Three 12-inch.) Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna National Opera conducted by Hans Swarowsky. The recording constitutes the première, a hundred and sixty years late, of a lyric and dramatic masterpiece into which the composer, serenely competent at fifty-nine, concentrated the knowledge accumulated in forty years of almost daily composing. Haydnists will forgive the limitations of space which enforce so laconic a statement of its beauties; and will perhaps accept the assurance that the work is not surpassed by any Haydn. The triumph of this first performance is the conductor's, whose direction of a splendid orchestra and chorus is ever lucent and plastic. There are only six soloists, of whom Hedda Heusser (Guardian Spirit) is best, while Herbert Handt (Orfeo) is generally good, Judith Hellwig (Euridice) is gracious in a lyric line and otherwise in a florid one; and the rest are acceptable. Except on part of side 2, where competitive voices set up a noisy flutter, the tonal values of a difficult recording are maintained with bright proficiency.

Oratorios

THE CREATION. HSLP-2005. (Three 12-inch.) Trude Eipperle, Friedl Riegler, sopranos; Julius Patzak, tenor; Alois Pernerstorfer, Georg Hann, basses; Chorus of the Vienna National Opera and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. The splendid, huge orchestra, expert chorus and knowing hand of Clemens Krauss almost succeed in making this set as definitive as the mutations of the phonograph permit, but a very excessive reverberation and needless overprominence of the solo voices are nuisances that will not burden a definitive edition.

THE SEASONS. HSLP-2027. (Three 12-inch.) Trude Eipperle, soprano; Julius Patzak, tenor; Georg Hann, bass; Chorus of the Vienna National Opera and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. Differs from the "Creation" above in these respects: a recording characteristic with greater emphasis on higher frequencies; reduction of reverberation, though this is still pronounced; diminution of orchestral prominence in relation to chorus.

Sonatas

FOR PIANO, NO. 20, IN C MINOR. (Sonata No. 50.) HSLP-3013. (10-inch) Virginia Pleasants. A moody, introspective, and questioning sonata, played with intelligent musicianship in a recording of good average quality.

FOR PIANO, NO. 50, IN C. (Sonata No. 20.) HSLP - 3013. (10 - inch) Virginia Pleasants. Piquant, brilliant, capricious, and entertaining, this is the composer's last piano sonata. Mrs. Pleasants's performance is agreeable in its small dimensions and appreciative observance of the sonata's musical temper. Recording as in No. 20.

Symphonies

NO. 1, IN D. (Symphonies No. 13 and 28.) HSLP-1001. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. No. 1, also No. 1 in the Haydn Society's catalogue, is an airy trifle of seven minutes, directed and played in corresponding spirit. Recording of the small orchestra very good, provided the treble can be reduced to proper proportions.

NO. 6, IN D, "LE MATIN." (Symphony No. 21.) HSLP-1025. Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. The first symphony written for Prince Esterhazy's court, for which the erstwhile rustic and choirboy here weaves a fabric of mellifluous grace worthy of the most sophisticated court imaginable. The playing is beautiful and the recording absolutely first rate, especially in its delineation of the color of individual instruments. One of the very best of all Haydn records.

NO. 7, IN C, "LE MIDI." (Symphony No. 8.) HSLP-1016. Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. The elegance of "Morning" is extended to "Noon," with Litschauer and his band of twenty-eight maintaining its symmetrical contours with immaculate suavity. Reproduction is excellent.

NO. 8, IN G, "LE SOIR." (Symphony No. 7.) HSLP-1016. Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. With "Evening" Haydn's tripartite day of infinite grace closes. The court has not been that could live up to the aristocratic exigencies of such a day. By

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his sensitive apprehension of all the nuances of the trilogy Litschauer has built a monument to himself not soon to be toppled. This disc and the preceding one are recommended without reservation.

NO. 13, IN D, "JUPITER." (Symphonies No. 1 and 28.) HSLP-1001. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. There is more granite in this structure than in any symphony of Haydn written previously. Sternberg conducts with good brio and the recording is of surprising merit for so early an issue, exception declared for the unlikely volume of the solo violoncello in the adagio.

NO. 21, IN A. (Symphony No. 6.) HSLP-1025. Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. Experimenting, Haydn made the entire opening movement a beautiful song, adagio, here expressively sung. The rest is decorative energy, the whole another triumph for this unsung conductor so persuasive with Haydn. The recording is very good: the fearless registering of the horns once overreaches itself, but such an occasional accident is preferable to their subjection.

NO. 22, IN E FLAT, "PHILOSOPHER." (Symphony No. 35.) HSLP-1009. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. Belies its number; could be accepted as 105. Reputedly Felix Weingartner's favorite among the Haydn symphonies, this insurrectionary marvel opens with a ravishing but portentous adagio dominated by two horns and two English horns, whose ominous tones carry a counterpoint in memory throughout the swift energy of ensuing three movements. Sternberg is very persuasive in this: it is his best work for the Haydn Society. The recording is good except for the bothersome horns in the first movement.

NO. 26, IN D MINOR, "LAMENTATIONE." (Symphony No. 36.) HSLP-1019. Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Anton Heiller. The conducting seems rigid although not extremely, the orchestra less unified than we have heard it, in a fair recording of a rough and tortured expression of Haydn's belief.

NO. 28, IN A. (Symphonies No. 1 and 13.) HSLP-1001. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. The melting slow movement—in fact each movement—of this prepossessing symphony is well felt, well played, and roundly recorded.

NO. 31, IN D, "HORNSIGNAL." (Symphony No. 34.) HSLP-1002. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. The recording is unsatisfactory. There is no other.

NO. 34, IN D MINOR. (Symphony No. 31.) HSLP-1002. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. A fit companion for its woeful obverse above.

NO. 35, IN B FLAT. (Symphony No. 22.) HSLP-1009. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. Cheerful and inventive but not over-consequential Haydn, brightly played and well recorded.

NO. 36, IN E FLAT. (Symphony No. 26.) HSLP-1019. Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Anton Heiller. There is nothing profound in this, but its froth and sparkle are stimulating. The performance is spirited, the recording good average.

NO. 38, IN C. (Symphony No. 39.) HSLP-1010. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. Notable for the tonal unity of the orchestral recording, very ingratiating in a solid, quiet way that is less fashionable than ostentatious brilliance. The symphony is lively but unimpassioned, and in the last two movements the conductor seems to tire of it.

NO. 39, IN G MINOR. (Symphony No. 38.) HSLP-1010. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. The relentless grim fever of this symphony combines well with its obverse immediately above to reveal Haydn's temperamental versatility. Its values are well displayed in the performance (save perfunctorily in the minuet), and the recording is average.

NO. 42, IN D. (Symphony No. 47.) HSLP-1026. Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. An interesting and successful recording in which the small orchestra (twenty-seven men) is engraved life-size to crowd one's livingroom. The interest is in musical pattern without emotional complications. Barring a little inconspicuous roughness the performance is expert.

NO. 44, IN E MINOR, "MOURNING." (Symphony No. 48.) HSLP-1003. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. The symphony narrates a world without hope, and the discomfort of the musicians therein is incompletely veiled by a pretty coarse and opaque recording.

NO. 47, IN G. (Symphony No. 42.) HSLP-1026. Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. The first two movements are tenuous to the point of tedium; the concluding pair sound a fanciful charm in welcome and amusing variance. The recording has no salient faults and Litschauer conducts with the sure musicianship we have by now learned to expect from him.

NO. 48, IN C, "MARIA THERESA." (Symphony No. 44.) HSLP-1003. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. To modern ears the restricted size of the band here may seem more appropriate to a Knight of Pythias than to the Mistress of the Knights of the Golden Fleece, German Empress, and "King" of Hungary. The brave splendor of such a showy ceremonial needs a mass of strength to flaunt it. Performance here variable; recording hard and coarse.

NO. 82, IN C, "THE BEAR." (Symphony No. 85.) HSLP-1008. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. With the Paris symphonies (of which this is the third) Haydn begins to display a confidence born of his realization that in musical craftsmanship he had no superior. He knows everything and tries anything. This "Bear," in a happy tramp by Sternberg, is witty, inventive, coruscating, and delightful. Once or twice a decade, it may be publicly performed somewhere in the United States. The recording is effective.

NO. 83, IN G MINOR, "THE HEN." (Symphony No. 84.) HSLP-1015. Collegium Musicum, Vienna, conducted by Anton Heiller. This is the first of the Paris set, worth better treatment than the limp interpretation and rough, strangely toneless recording allotted it here.

NO. 84, IN E FLAT. (Symphony No. 83.) HSLP-1015. Collegium Musicum, Vienna, conducted by Anton Heiller. Harsh string tone, ragged chords, and flaccid direction achieve a place for this fourth of the Paris symphonies near the bottom of the Haydn Society's list.

NO. 85, IN B FLAT, "QUEEN OF FRANCE." (Symphony No. 82.) HSLP-1008. Orchestra of the National Opera, Vienna, conducted by Erwin Baltzer. With No. 86 (not yet recorded on LP), in a class apart from the other members of the Paris set, despite the beauties of those. "La Reine" is an always captivating abstract design of melodious euphony. It was made to caress cultivated ears. Thanks to this record we can hear it. Interpretation is conscientious, playing good, and recording adequate on phonographs permitting correction of an exaggerated treble. There is an obtrusive background rumble.

NO. 87, IN A. (Symphony No. 89.) HSLP-1018. Orchestra of the National Opera, Vienna, conducted by Hans Swarowsky. The conductor takes control at the first measure and never relinquishes it. The nervous excitation of the first movement is admirably realized, with a sure phrasing and manipulation of dynamics immediately seizing; and the subsequent movements show in their different way the same decisive leadership. The sound imprisoned is a perplexing mixture of conflicting qualities: mellow, but then rough; velour, succeeded by horsehair.

NO. 89, IN F. (Symphony No. 87.) HSLP-1018. Orchestra of the National Opera, Vienna, conducted by Hans Swarowsky. The remarks attached to No. 87 above, the obverse of the present pleasant procession of courtly sounds, remain valid here where the general nature of leadership and recording is concerned. In both works careful correction is necessary for both bass and treble.

Miscellaneous

DANCES FOR THE REDOUTENSAAL. HSLP-1022. Orchestra of the National Opera, Vienna, conducted by Hans Gillesberger. Haydn made this fragrant garland of twenty-four dances—*ländler* alternating with minuets—in his maturity. The *ländler* naturally resemble the later Mozart pieces in this lively form. Their exposition is pretty well handled by conductor and orchestra, and the reproduction, of a brilliant sort, is good enough after rectification of bass and treble. An understandable gratitude for bewitching archaic novelties like this which are unlikely to be recorded again for a decade often leads to exaggerated praise of the edition. That would be an error here: the disc is agreeable, but Gillesberger, wishing to express the contrast between dignified minuet and roystering *ländler*, tends to make the former more portly than majestic.

(To be concluded next month)

Aspects of

THE INTRODUCTION of several new record-playing devices featuring an "infinite" number of speed choices (some makers mention "thousands") instead of the usual few fixed speeds brings up the interestingly complex question of pitch variation in recorded music. There are more ramifications here than any sane reader can digest in a sitting; home player problems, disc and tape recorder problems, even some highly disputable musical questions in regard to pitch, proper and otherwise. The sound you hear is, as usual, a composite of all these matters and if any pitch question has been perturbing you, peace of mind will be unlikely until they are sorted out.

Let's consider these new variable-speed motors as an opener. Zenith's latest changer (not available separately) is the representative at the moment in the standard home-machine field, the Rek-O-Kut motor, model CVS-12, in the fancier separate-unit area. Why the need for these? What might be the advantages, and the opposite? Especially when you realize that the very ability featured here is one which every wind-up phonograph of the acoustical age had as a matter of necessity, as well as most early electrics until shortly before World War II when the common adjustable speed indicator disappeared with the advent of motors that were automatically right. We've been doing splendidly with these fixed-speed motors (one, two, or three speeded) since then. Why a return to the old system?

Let us assume that the new motors are offered to meet a need as well as to create new sales, that they solve problems not always met by the ordinary motors. There's evidence for this. It is quite true that even though our own AC house current is usually accurate in its cycles-per-second, the current used elsewhere in the world and notably in Europe—where many records now originate—is anything but steady. In spite of some expensive devices now available, unsteady current usually means unsteady pitch in the records, as a good listen to the recent crop abundantly indicates. Our fixed-speed machines can do no more than play these aberrations exactly as recorded. Adjustable pitch can help, if you're willing to do the adjusting (and if you have a good ear and/or a point of reference such as a piano or pitch pipe, or if you have absolute pitch).

It's also true that even with correct records we may have trouble. Occa-

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Variable Pitch

sionally a large swing in house current voltage (too many TV sets and toasters all at once) may disturb the exactness of the usual motor. Some motors run too fast, some too slow, due to variable size (and to wear) in rubber drive wheels. In such cases you can't do a thing; but if you have variable speed you can adjust to your heart's content.

Even better reasons make the variable speed motor *de rigeur* for some special interests. Those who play their pianos along with records (as in Columbia's Add-a-Part albums) will suffer out-of-tune agony with an untunable standard phono and a piano that doesn't quite match. Adjustable speed of the new mode will make for perfect harmony. Collectors of ancient acoustical records have probably come to realize that those super-coloratura displays they treasure are quite often the result of a tired recording turntable that ran too slow. The new motors will bring the operatic ladies and gentlemen back to their soberly normal pitch—if you really want them that way.

The new motors—happy days—achieve variability with no more friction than the quite respectable mating of rubber and metal, via any of several strictly mechanical "gearing" principles. A rotating disc may drive a wheel that is movable in and out from the center, with varying speed the result. (Margin Control, the variable grooving of records, operates basically this way to vary the spiral during the actual cutting.) Or one may utilize Rek-O-Kut's ingenious cone-shaped driving wheel, against which the usual black rubber disc (its edge slanted to match) is movable up or down from the thick to the thin portions of the cone, thus providing an infinite number of neatly fixed speeds.

But move slowly, my friends, and with caution. As far as most of us are concerned the average fixed phone motor will operate quite nicely most of the time and pitch annoyances will still be merely occasional. Remember that adjusting pitch, whether by ear or with the clumsy aid of a stroboscope disc under a strong light, is a constantly annoying and repetitious job which you will not want to do very often if you can help it. The position for the usual speeds are marked on the new tables—but I privately distrust their exactitude and would feel constrained myself to double-check each time, just to be sure.

Three speeds or three thousand—take your choice, but take it slowly.

—Edward Tatnall Canby.

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Recordings in Review

Two by Toscanini

SCHUBERT: *Symphony in B minor ("Unfinished"). Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra.* (RCA Victor LP 54, $4.67.)

RESPIGHI: *"Feste Romane." Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra.* (RCA Victor LP 55, $4.67.)

ON SOME occasions in the past few years Toscanini has made something both impressive and Schubertian of this imperishable fragment, but the occasion when this recording was made was not one of them. I refer especially to the first movement, which is given an accent not inappropriate to the "Eroica," with tympani to match and exacerbating thrusts of the violin bows on a scale of expression quite exaggerated. The second movement has much more reasonable proportion, in dynamics and accent, with some remarkable shading of the woodwind solos. As in the previous releases by London and Columbia (also by RCA itself, in Koussevitzky's LP 7), the use of a ten-inch LP makes the continuous form of this work more expensive than it was as a 78-rpm album. Good, but not exceptional recording.

The Respighi is a triumph in every respect in which the Schubert is a compromise—as a realization of the gaudy score, as a sounding likeness of the performance itself, and in its utilization of a suitable proportion of the available recording time. I can imagine somebody twenty-five years hence contemplating this lurid blob of orchestral tone color and saying: "Why not Elgar's 'Enigma' Variations, as only Toscanini did them, instead?" The technicians, however, have done wonderfully with the problem posed to them, especially on side 2.

Once Over Lightly

ROSSINI: *"Il Barbiere di Siviglia." Giuseppe Taddei, Giulietta Simionato, Luigi Infantino, Carlo Badioli (Bartolo), and Antonio Cassinelli (Basilio) with the orchestra of Radio Italiana conducted by Fernando Previtali.* (Cetra-Soria LP set 1211, $17.85.)

CETRA-SORIA has performed one of its typical services in giving not only the first complete "Barbiere" on LP (and only the second in recorded history) but more significantly the first in which Rosina is sung by the mezzo-soprano voice for which it was written. It may merely be my imagination, but I find all the recitative in which she engages with the other characters more aurally satisfying at the lower pitch, and the whole sound—so far as the excellent Giulietta Simionato, favorably remembered from the same composer's "Cenerentola," is concerned—possessed of more character and interest than it is in the average coloratura's chirpy twitter. Since she manages a bright high B in her well-sung "Una voce poca fa," it cannot be said that the sound is restricted in range or lacking in variety.

For the rest the cast is distinguished by solid competence rather than brilliance, with a single bad report for the unpredictable Luigi Infantino. As Almaviva he misuses a plausible tenor voice as shamefully as he did in Columbia's "La Traviata." Taddei, as might be suspected from his Falstaff and Gianni Schicchi, is not only a first-class Figaro, but an unexpectedly musical one. His "Largo al factotum" is briskly sung, with a grateful absence of the wheezes, whistles, snorts, and barks which such *barbieri* as Lorenzo Tibbetto and Gian-Carlo Tomaso exported from Camden. Indeed, under the attentive, incisively rhythmic treatment of Previtali the musical values of the score are given a justice rarely accorded them, especially in the ensembles and concerted sections Rossini modeled on Mozart. This applies from the well-played Overture through Simionato's singing in the lesson scene of "L'Inutile Precauzione," which aria Rossini wrote for the purpose. As recording this is consistently clear, sharp, and well balanced.

Respighi Plus

RESPIGHI: *"Antiche Danza ed Arie per liuto," Suite No. 3. Karl Münchinger conducting the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra;* also PERGOLESI: *Concertino in F minor. The same.* (London LP 312, $5.95.)

OTTORINO Respighi's repute as an archeologist and arranger—based on such works as this one, the "Boutique Fantasque" issued last month, "The Birds," etc.—has long been greater (among those who remember them from a previous phonographic era) than his rank as originator of the gaudy tone poems of the Roman persuasion. Those who missed this suite when it was last current—upwards of fifteen years ago—will find it a compendium of delight, full of melodic fancy (not Respighi's) and a rich range of tasteful orchestral colorations. Münchinger's reputation for quality work is more than sustained by this latest example, which is played by his excellent ensemble with stylistic grace and fine precision. The recording is high among the list of London's best.

The Pergolesi "Concertino" is another in a seemingly inexhaustible series of works on the sub-symphonic scale whose musical probity, eloquence, and stylistic certainty make their exclusion from the ordinary round of concert-giving in this country as inexplicable as it is absurd. Münchinger's ensemble plays with model devotion and freshness of sound, glamorized by London's microphone artistry, which may one of these days be revealed as akin to "trick" photography.

Ffrr "Firebird"

STRAVINSKY: *"L'Oiseau de Feu." Ernest Ansermet conducting l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande.* (London LP 300, $4.95.)

IT SEEMS the unhappy fate of Ernest Ansermet to put forth some of his most effective and characteristic effort not only *pro* Stravinsky, but *contra* Stravinsky as well. We distinguish here, of course, between Stravinsky the composer and Stravinsky the phonographic interpreter of his own works. As in "Petrouchka" and "Sacre du Printemps," of which accredited LP versions exist by the composer himself, Ansermet follows his own star to results more evocative, expressive, and meaningful than those by any other, including the composer himself. Some of this is due to superior reproduction (Stokowski had it, too, in "L'Oiseau de Feu" though not to such stunning results), but as much, I think, to a better balanced conception. Fine recording in any case.

Sense per Minute

GLUCK: *"Alceste" Overture. Wilhelm Furtwängler conducting the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra;* also BEETHOVEN: *"Cavatina" from Quartet in B flat (Opus 130). Same.* (Capitol Telefunken LP 8130, $2.98.)

A VENTURE into marketing music per minute of playing time, in which two "overture-length" works are offered on a ten-inch LP at a price comparable to their 78-rpm equivalents. The introductory choice is

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something less than ideal, for the "Alceste" Overture is but a "two-side" (78 rpm) overture, the "Cavatina" an extract from a longer work. In itself the latter is but nine minutes in length.

However, the trend of thinking is encouraging; though if such a firm as Remington could maintain the quality of its reproduction in the new Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto (see page 58) in combination with performances of similar artistic worth, it could make the "progress" here represented a mere intermediate step. Capitol would be operating in a better frame of realistic reference were they to offer, say, the "Meistersinger" and "Tannhäuser" overtures on a ten-inch LP at these prices.

In other respects this is a notably fine pair of performances by Furtwängler, in which the "Alceste" Overture duplicates the impression it conveyed in conventional form when reissued some months ago and the quietly beautiful playing of the unearthly "Cavatina" reminds us of Furtwängler's unforgettable performance of the "Grosse Fugue" similarly enlarged for string orchestra. The quality of string sound is remarkably fine.

Auvergne to Cornwall

CANTELOUBE: *"Songs of the Auvergne"; also miscellaneous folk songs. Susan Reed, soprano, with chamber group.* (Columbia LP 54368, $5.45.)

GLUCK: *"Divinités du Styx," various other arias. Suzanne Danco, soprano, with Suisse Romande orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede.* (London LLP 224, $5.95.)

LOEWE: *"Prinz Eugen" and other ballads. Wilhelm Strienz, basso, with Hans Willi Häusslein, piano.* (London LP 310, $5.95.)

MOZART: *"Il Mio Tesoro," other arias. Richard Tauber, tenor.* (Decca LP 8512, $4.85.)

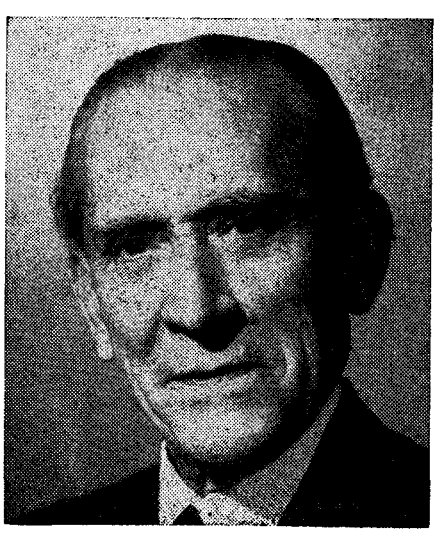
WAGNER: *"Isolde's Narrative," etc. Helen Traubel, soprano, with orchestra conducted by Frieder Weissmann.* (RCA Victor LP 1122, $5.72.)

WHILE saluting the enterprise of Susan Reed on behalf of Marie-Joseph Canteloube and the Auvergne as nothing less than historic—we have always had the view that some sort of happy accident brought the original records by Madeleine Grey into being—I must rate the results a good try and nothing more. I can understand the impulse that prompted Miss Reed to ask an arranger (Sam Feldman) to compress the Canteloube scoring for a concert performance in Town Hall, but not the logic that prompted Columbia to record it in this *ersatz* form. On the whole I think I would have been amenable to any reasonable compromise, but this is an unreasonable one which puts a grand piano in incongruous juxtaposition to the reed instruments suggestive of the original setting.

Those reeds play beautifully in this adaptation, and Miss Reed is a sensitive, if rather unsubtle, singer; but the misty charm, the wise eloquence of the model by Grey is seldom approached by her dutiful effort. On the whole, however, I think she does as well as one could reasonably expect; but Columbia has let us down badly by endorsing an instrumental accompaniment not merely economical (which could be understood) but also inappropriate (which cannot). On the overside Miss Reed sings "Sweet Betsy from Pike," "Turtle Dove," and other rural specialities, to her own zither accompaniment.

Progressing northward from Auvergne one encounters in the neighborhood of Brussels a fervent, versatile voice from Suzanne Danco in support of such matter as "Depuis le jour" from "Louise," Manon's farewell to the table, and Micaela's third-act aria from "Carmen," together with the less common "Divinités du Styx" from Gluck's "Alceste" and "When I am Laid in Earth" from Purcell's "Dido." Danco is an interpreter of resource as well as a musician of character, whose in-person debut is awaited here in April. The recorded sound is excellent, as are the orchestral accompaniments by Erede.

Crossing the Rhine we find a stimulating brew in seven ballads of the great Karl Loewe, with the further promise of service by Wilhelm Strienz. The repertory comprises virtually all



—*Lipnitzki.*

Joseph Canteloube — "an enterprise nothing less than historic."

—*Ghitta Carell.*

Suzanne Danco — "an interpreter of resource . . . a musician of character."

of Loewe that has been in and out of the catalogues during the last twenty years—"Prinz Eugen," "Tom der Reimer," "Edward," "Der Selt'ne Better," "Die Uhr," etc.—in a compact succession. However, Strienz is a sadly disillusioning singer; the richness remembered from his part in the Beecham "Magic Flute" is no more, with a strained kind of baritone-tenor present instead. Some evidences of art remain, but hardly enough to compensate for the vocal lapses.

Out of the same general area, however, comes a welcome revival of the great days of Richard Tauber, in a miscellany that takes in the notable Mozart arias for tenor from "Don Giovanni," "Zauberflöte," and "Die Entführung," plus others by Weber, Offenbach, and Bizet. I don't suppose there is a single one that hasn't been better sung by some tenor sometime, but taken together they speak of an art impressive in scope and remarkable in detail, with an unmistakably personal accent. The transfers to the LP are well done.

Moving northward, the listener finds the stormy stretch of sea from Ireland to England occupied by Helen Traubel and the exacting narrative from the first act of "Tristan," together with the "Liebestod," "Elisabeth's Prayer" ("Tannhäuser"), and "Euch lüften" ("Lohengrin"). In the "Narrative," which is the longest as well as the most demanding of these, Mme. Traubel performs with impressive breadth and fervor as long as the music is within her present range; but the high tones at the climax are mere ugly sounds which make one wonder why she should leave so indelible an evidence of her current limitations. Weissmann's conducting is both forceful and deferential, depending on a too obvious relation to the prominent performer. The recording is uniformly excellent. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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Recordings Reports: Classical LP's and Albums

See page 64 for Hits and Misses

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Bach: "Italian Concerto." Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt conducting the Berlin Philharmonic. Capitol Telefunken LP 8128, $3.98.	Were one unacquainted with this score in its original keyboard form, this would seem a thoroughly representative work of the composer, though with some unexpected doublings, especially in the finale. Neither label nor liner identify the transcriber. The performance is vigorous, the recording satisfactory. Overside are three canons and a six-part Ricercar from the "Musical Offering," well played by the Wiesbaden Collegium Musicum directed by Edmund Weyns.
Beethoven: Sonata in A ("Kreutzer"). Francescatti and Casadesus. Columbia LP 4327, $4.85.	Solid, well-balanced performance, and surely the best-sounding now available. Temperamentally, the artists are most at home in the variations, which are beautifully played. Both the first and last movements could bite deeper than either performer demands from his instrument.
Beethoven: Sonata in A flat, Opus 26. Walter Gieseking, piano. Columbia LP 4334, $4.85.	Rather fussy, finger-conscious playing by Gieseking, not nearly so convincing a sample of his postwar skill as the C major Concerto of last fall. The recording is a dubbing from European masters, and rather dull in sound. Both sound and sounder are closer to expected quality in five Grieg pieces on the reverse side, including "Butterfly" and "Wedding Day at Troldhaugen."
Beethoven: Sonata in C minor, Opus 111. Jacob Lateiner, piano. Columbia LP 4335, $4.85.	Amazingly adroit work by young Lateiner, whose disc debut is one of the most auspicious in months. Power and authority in his pianistic manner are matched by a comprehension of the work's character worthy of comparison with previous recordings by Schnabel and Petri. (I have not heard the recent Solomon.) Excellent piano tone in this and the added "Andante Favori" in F. This is awkwardly placed *before* the first movement of the sonata, though I cannot suggest a better arrangement on the LP.
Beethoven: Concerto in D. Zino Francescatti, violin, with Ormandy conducting the Philadelphia Orch. Columbia LP 54371, $5.45.	Francescatti's Beethoven is certainly worth a place on records, though the personality and style of the playing are a little bland to suit my taste in Beethoven. Splendid sound from all concerned. More of the exalted score can be heard in the Szigeti-Walter, and a treatment that is more powerfully individual in the newly reissued Heifetz-Toscanini.
Berlioz: Excerpts from "Damnation of Faust." Willem Mengelberg conducting the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra. Capitol LP 8127, $3.98.	The three usual items—"Menuet," "Danse des Sylphes," and "Rakoczy" March—in their first LP appearances. However, this is hardly a prime consideration, for each did very nicely on conventional 78 rpm sides. It is something, however, to hear Mengelberg's discipline at work to the benefit of Berlioz, in a reproduced sound that was far in advance of the common quality of a decade ago and is still revealing. With it is the classic performance of the Tchaikovsky "1812," more successfully dubbed than in the previous utilization by Mercury.
Chopin: "Ballade" No. 1, etc. Simon Barere, piano. Remington LP 199-17, $2.19.	Uninhibited virtuosity by Simon Barere in this and the subjoined C sharp minor Scherzo, with Liszt's version of the "Faust" Waltz, his "Gnomenreigen" and "Liebesträume" No. 3. At the quoted price this is certainly the lowest rate per note at which fine piano playing has ever been offered. The piano sound is clean, but rather dull and distant from the microphone, the noise level of the surface a bit more pronounced than in the best contemporary examples of LP vinylite.
Debussy: "Images" (Books I and II). Claudio Arrau, piano. Columbia LP 2162, $4.	Conscientious execution by Arrau, whose tone and phrasing, however, leave me unconvinced—in such imagery as "Reflets dans l'eau," "Poissons d'or," or "Cloches à travers les feuilles"—that someone else's reproduction would not be more colorful than his blacks and whites. It's all too palpable and careful for my preference in Debussy. Good piano reproduction, though Arrau's tone is no dream of sonority. My copy had a noisy surface.
Gould: "Philharmonic Waltzes." Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting the New York Philharmonic. Columbia LP 2167, $4.	One of the most miscellaneous records of all time, with Gould represented by three waltzes as titled at the left and the "Quickstep" from his Second Symphony (the latter conducted by the composer). Overside Stokowski plays Griffes's "White Peacock" and the "Prairie Night" and "Celebration Dance" from Copland's "Billy the Kid." The effect of the sequence is to make Copland, who comes last, sound like an imitator of Gould, who comes first on the disc but not in the concept of his Coplandish slow waltz (No. 2). Big, bold recording sound throughout, also some shallow string tone from Mitropoulos.
Mendelssohn: "Midsummer Night's Dream" music. Clemens Krauss conducting the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. Vox LP 6830, $5.95.	Beautifully stylistic playing by the orchestra, which is rather sluggishly conducted by Krauss in a recording inferior both to the Decca LP 8516 (Ferenc Fricsay-Berlin Philharmonic) mentioned last month and the Toscanini-NBC on 78 rpm. Factually, this version offers even more of the score than all the others, including a "Song for Two Sopranos."
Mendelssohn: Concerto in E minor. Isaac Stern, violin, with Eugene Ormandy conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra. Columbia LP 54363, $5.45.	The health and vigor of this performance sometimes verge on the merely muscular, but it is a notable example of violinistic skill and sustained purity of sound. However, it has neither the lightness and *élan* of Heifetz in the first and last movements, nor the superbly songful impulse of Szigeti in the second. Excellent reproduction of the fine accompaniment under Ormandy. Overside is the rough but ruddy playing of the Brahms D minor Sonata by Stern and Zakin.
Rachmaninoff. Concerto No. 3. Witold Malcuzynski with the Philharmonia Orch. conducted by Paul Kletzki. Columbia LP 54369, $5.45.	A new version by Horowitz would certainly be preferable to this dutiful but not very doughty treatment of a work whose bigness and power can hardly be minimized. The reproduction of both piano and orchestra are acceptable, though of the undefined, lusterless sort best defined as "mushy."
Tchaikovsky: Concerto in D. Michele Auclair, violin, with the Austrian Symphony Orchestra, Kurt Woss conducting. Remington LP 199-20, $2.19.	The best Remington disc to come along, with young Miss Auclair a vivid, forceful player of the Neveu type, though not yet completely disciplined. She commands a lovely, lustrous tone and a forthright, sympathetic style which evokes a response from even these much-played patterns. Woss conducts energetically if not quite in the manner we are accustomed to hearing in this work, and the reproduction is by much the best yet heard on one of these inexpensive discs.
Wieniawski: Concerto No. 2, in D minor. Mischa Elman, violin, with Alexander Hilsberg conducting the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra. RCA Victor LP 53, $4.67.	Even before Elman enters with his golden tone there is an earful of listening in Hilsberg's deft statement of the orchestral introduction and the superb playing of it by the summer version of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Elman is not so consistent a violinist as either Heifetz or Stern, who recorded it previously, but he produces some luscious sound in the Romance and it is all stunningly reproduced. Hilsberg, incidentally, should be honored with more than his phonographic duties to date. —IRVING KOLODIN.

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Intercontinental Chamber Music

BRAHMS: *Trio in E flat, Opus* 40. *Annie d'Arco, piano, Georges Alès, violin, and Jean Devémy, French horn.* (Mercury LP 15015, $3.85.)

MOZART: *Quintet in G minor* (*K.* 516). *The Griller Quartet with Max Gilbert, viola.* (London LP 132, $5.95.)

MOZART: *Quartets in G* (*K.* 387) *and D minor* (*K.* 421). *Budapest Quartet.* (Columbia LP 54360, $5.45.)

SCHUBERT: *Quartet in D minor* ("*Tod und das Mädchen*"). *Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet.* (Westminster LP 50-52, $5.95.)

STRAUSS: *Quartet, Opus* 13. *Bernardo Segall, piano, with Jose Figueroa, violin, Frank Brieff, viola, and George Ricci, cello.* (New Records LP 201, $5.95.)

TO JUDGE from this sampling of a numerous and diversified influx of chamber-music recordings in recent weeks, London and Vienna are twin poles of magnetic attraction in this field, with Paris and New York exerting influence of lesser power. Not to muddle the matter more, I find a close contest in expressiveness between the superlative Mozart G minor by the Grillers and the almost as fine "Death and the Maiden" of the Konzerthaus players. The Budapesters Mozart (by now, surely, they should be called the New World Quartet) is remarkably precise and well recorded, but the feeling persists that the scores of Mozart are a means to the end of showing off the abilities of the players rather than an expressive objective in themselves. Fine recording, to be sure, but more than a

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BRAHMS
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Guenther Weiss, 2nd Cello.

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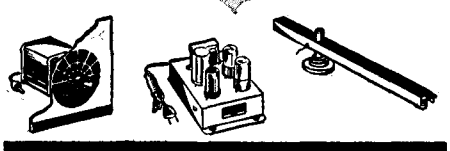

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little glassy and impersonal as performance.

The Grillers, on the other hand, sing with a fervor reticent but determined, in a style from which virtuosity is as remote as self-display. Neither the Pro Arte nor the Lener versions of the dim past nor the Budapest one of the more recent period gave us so much of the music in this marvelous score in an equal balance of discipline and expressiveness. As for the recording, it has both brilliance and mellowness with a clear distinction of tonal qualities quite exceptional.

The Schubert playing of the Konzerthaus ensemble (which now embraces the G major quartet as well as the C major quintet) will doubtless be worth an essay one day soon, but the present contribution may be noted as infinitely more satisfying than any previous one for home consumption, whether Philharmonia, Fine Art, Busch, or Roth. There are fewer idiosyncrasies of tempo than in the other Schubert they have recorded, but no less acute feeling for melodic flow, dynamic proportion, and tonal balance. In fact, I have never heard a playing of the sublime variations on "Death and the Maiden" so free, so clean, and so meaningful, with a tempestuous strength quite unique. The recording art here is quite the equal of London's, a phrase with its own connotations.

By comparison both the Brahms and Strauss issues currently noted are in the utility rather than the luxury category. The French-derived Mercury disc has more than cursory interest for the even ability of the players, their harmonious attitude toward work of many peculiar difficulties. I regret, however, that a better balance wasn't arranged, for the violin is too often irrelevantly loud at the expense of the horn. However, Devémy is a virtuoso on his difficult instrument, and the Mercury dubbing from Paris originals has been well done.

The Strauss quartet, of his twentieth year, is a work which might well have made the reputation of another man than the one who wrote "Don Juan," "Till Eulenspiegel," and "Tod und Verklärung" in the next decade of his life. That is, for Reger it would have been a masterpiece; for Strauss it is a work of much lyric charm derived from Brahms, but with a pace and layout quite his own. The playing has been carefully prepared, but not at the expense of spontaneity, in a performance that always has movement and direction. The piano reproduction is a little dull and unresonant, but the total result is well above the acceptable.

—I. K.

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The Golden Age of RCA

BEETHOVEN: *Trio in B flat, Opus 97 ("Archduke"). Artur Rubinstein, Jascha Heifetz, and Emanuel Feuermann.* (RCA Victor LCT 1020, $5.72.)

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto in D. Jascha Heifetz, NBC Symphony conducted by Arturo Toscanini.* (LCT 1010, $5.72.)

BEETHOVEN: *Concerto in C minor, No. 3. Artur Rubinstein, with NBC Symphony conducted by Arturo Toscanini.* (LCT 1009, $5.72.)

BEETHOVEN: *Symphony No. 7 in A. Arturo Toscanini conducting the N. Y. Philharmonic Symphony.* (LCT 1013, $5.72.)

BRAHMS: *Concerto in A minor. Jascha Heifetz and Emanuel Feuermann, with Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy.* (LCT 1016, $5.72.)

HAYDN: *Symphony No. 88 in G. Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony Orchestra.* (LCT 7, $4.67.)

PROKOFIEFF: *Concerto No. 2 in G minor. Jascha Heifetz, with Boston Symphony conducted by Serge Koussevitzky.* (LCT 6, $4.67.)

RACHMANINOFF: *Concerto No. 2 in C minor. Serge Rachmaninoff, with Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski.* (LCT 1014, $5.72.)

SCHUBERT: *Trio in B flat, Opus 99. Artur Rubinstein, Jascha Heifetz, and Emanuel Feuermann.* (LCT 1017, $5.72.)

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Concerto in B flat minor. Vladimir Horowitz, with NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Toscanini.* (LCT 1012, $5.72.)

Jascha Heifetz—"superlatively consistent."

PASSING these LP reissues in a swift review of a lengthy winter's night (the nights on the north side of 45th Street are longer than elsewhere), one is plunged headlong into a sea of musical memories, into a current as compelling as it is irresistible. To be sure, this sampling represents only a fractional per cent of the records RCA produced in the period from 1935 to 1940 (give or take a year on either side), but each of them has a firm claim to be, in fact, what the labeling proclaims: "From the Treasury of Immortal Performances."

So far I have encountered one authentic technical miracle: the processing of the Tchaikovsky concerto with Horowitz and Toscanini. It was originally made in Carnegie Hall, of course, which helps; but some arbitrating fairy that presided over this hectic interlude saw to it that the wax was remarkably retentive. I remember the original as a kind of headlong rush, with tinny cymbals and clanking piano chords from Horowitz. Thanks perhaps to my far more responsive equipment as well as a superlatively successful transfer to microgroove, it is now a rousing experience in reproductive fervor. Moreover, I find much more in the performance that is convincing than confusing—again, *contra* memory. Per-

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haps it is the effect of continuity, in which momentary details blend into a recognizable whole; but aside from a few passages (especially in the finale) still rash by any standard, it is merely an incredibly vital and powerful restatement of a work hardly entitled to so much consideration. I venture the assertion that pianists and conductors will still be listening to it attentively in 2001.

Each of the other nine LP reissues in this initial series has compelling elements of musical interest, despite various degrees of technical imperfection. I would describe as unique the leonine, infinitely expressive performance by Rachmaninoff of his Second Concerto, with a Stokowski-conducted accompaniment of incomparable richness; the broad stride and marvelously integrated balance of the Brahms Double Concerto as played by Heifetz and Feuermann; the weighty but delicately controlled Beethoven No. 7 by Toscanini with the Philharmonic-Symphony; the dryly unresonant Haydn No. 88, which is more a bas relief of a major musical expression by Toscanini and the NBC Orchestra than it is the impression of one, but unique nevertheless; and the glistening excellence of Heifetz in the Prokofieff No. 2 with Koussevitzky. As a surprise secondary only to the Tchaikovsky concerto, the Beethoven No. 3 with Rubinstein and Toscanini has been converted into a recognizable memento of a historic occasion.

One of the superlatively consistent performers in this sampling—whether Beethoven, Schubert, or Prokofieff—is Jascha Heifetz, whose performance of the Beethoven Violin Concerto has been granted a permanence in mechanical means wholly owing to its musical superiority. As for the trios with Feuermann and Rubinstein, they remain an abiding musical joy, not only for the even virtuosity of all the participants, but even more for the musical enthusiasm, the good will and selflessness with which the performances have been accomplished.

The variety of problems presented to the home phonograph by these records is almost as numerous as the records themselves; but the two repeated characteristics I have encountered are lack of volume and attenuated bass. If your machine can compensate for these, I think that the authentic musical values in each can be rendered at something like today's *quantity* of sound, with the quality definitely uncertain. However, if RCA's technicians can do as well with the many other things we have been promised, I think that most will grant them four-star rank among the brass of RCA's heavy artillery. This volley, certainly, has hit the mark. —I. K.

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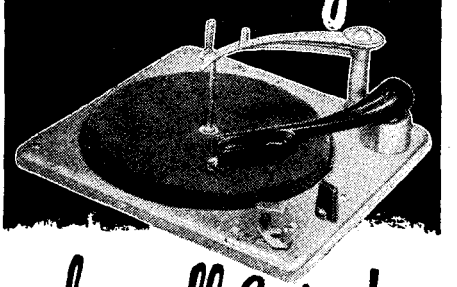

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Styles in Schumann

SCHUMANN: *"Carnaval" and various other works. Adelina de Lara,* (Clara Schumann Society, £3. 10 sh. —seven 12-inch 78-rpm records.)

SCHUMANN: *"Carnaval"*; also CHOPIN: *Sonata in B minor, Opus 58. Guiomar Novaës.* (Vox LP 6710, $5.95.)

ADELINA de Lara is a remarkable woman—of that there is no doubt—who is identified as the last surviving pupil of Clara Schumann, with whom she studied in the Nineties as a girl in her teens. Mme. De Lara is now seventy-nine, and she recorded these fourteen sides slightly more than a year ago. The introductory side, in which she speaks of her experience as a Schumann pupil and cites some specific respects in which the Schumann tradition was handed on to her, is a foreshadowing in its vigorous statement and clarity of thought of the playing that follows.

Mme. De Lara makes it clear that speed for speed's sake has no place in Schumann; but the pace and accent of the "Novelette" (Opus 21), the "Nachtstück," or the "Träumerei" are not greatly different from the performances we remember by contemporaries of hers who were neither Schumann pupils nor so long lived: Rachmaninoff, for example, or Rosenthal, or Gabrilowitsch. Generally it is what we would today call "musical" playing, that is, a performance in which the curve of a phrase, the accent on a line, the stress on texture would be clearly related to the sense conveyed by the printed page.

The "Carnaval" is another, perhaps a special, matter. It is for the most part faster than we are accustomed to hear it played; but I wonder if that is really Mme. De Lara's intent or if there is a nervous acceleration aroused in her by this work that was absent in the others. I think of it in this way only because she is technically less assured in "Carnaval" than in others which are just as difficult. In any case, it is the most interesting of the repertory presented (the B flat minor "Romance," Opus 28, the Opus 3 Etude after Paganini, the D minor Fugue from Opus 72, and "The Elf," in addition to those already mentioned) for its many illuminating phrasings, its stop-and-go tempi, and its superbly lyric shaping of line. Though the piano reproduction is poorish by contemporary standards, there is much here to interest the serious artist or teacher.

It is instructive to follow Mme. De Lara's playing with a conception that is widely regarded as among the best of our time: that of Guiomar Novaës. Having heard the disc a week before Mme. De Lara's I am not attributing to mere propinquity the opinion that the "Preamble" is over-deliberately played. Thereafter, Novaës is off on an exposition both expressive and subtle, with some felicities of thought quite uncommon even for her and at times a delirium of movement actually ecstatic. We expect to revert to this subject when the Rachmaninoff reissue finally appears on LP, but the sum of the matter is that the "Carnaval" is an extremely personal piece of music of which there is certainly a wrong treatment but more than one right one. As of now, the Novaës is the "rightest" I know on discs. The sound is curiously lacking in brilliance, but much of it has the real velvety sonority for which Novaës is celebrated. It would be painting the lily to go on at equal length about Novaës's Chopin, though the opportunity certainly exists. It will suffice to say that she plays this supremely lyric work with a sensitivity and pulse quite uniquely her own. Vox can well be proud of this pairing.

—THE EDITOR.

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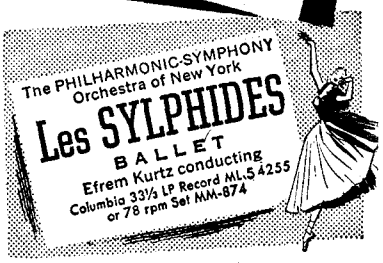

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HITS AND MISSES

JUSTICE has at last been done by one of the best of all Rodgers and Hart scores—"Pal Joey"—in an excellent performance by Vivienne Segal, the original Vera, with the ballet dancer Harold Lang substituting admirably for the tap dancer Gene Kelley. It is difficult to believe that ten years ago there were certain moral objections raised to this whole effort, except that one bears in mind that ten years is a seventh of a normal life span and a period of time long enough to embrace the change between horse and gasoline haulage or, for that matter, government by the Kings of England and by assorted occupants of the White House. The point here simply is that after ten years nobody is going to make much comment about the immorality of "Pal Joey."

One of the most charming songs ever written in four-four time is "Happy Hunting Horn," which celebrates, without any particular effort at concealment, a pastime specifically interdicted by Scripture, and the blithe and airy way in which Segal and Lang go about that lovely ditty called "In Our Little Den of Iniquity" indicates no expectation whatsoever of the wages of sin. I am afraid the fact of the matter is that Richard Rodgers is a fundamentally innocent man and, by some freak of circumstance, a mighty tuneful innocent. When he tackles all these delicate problems there isn't a snigger or leer in evidence, and the same may be said of the late Lorenz Hart. Not all of the songs, of course, are devil's food. "Zip" has to do with the heavy cultural matters Gypsy Rose Lee considers while removing her garments, and "I Could Write a Book" sounds as though Rodgers and Hart had remembered some summer idyll rather than John O'Hara's wintry-hearted hero. "Pal Joey," in short, is a delightful long-player (Columbia LP 4364, $4.85).

Some of our readers who admire our devotion to home cooking such as Jelly Roll Morton, Meade Lux Lewis, and Art Hodes provide at the piano may be scornful of a plug for a cafe pianist, and especially such a smartly dinner-jacketed pianist as Cy Walter, but we have never pretended to be single-minded. Cy's "Piano Moods" (Columbia LP 6161, $3) is an album of beauties by some of our best songwriters, played with unflagging taste (Walter is a rich but never a cloying pianist). We were particularly glad to find certain rarities sumptuously turned out—Rodgers's "You'll Never Walk Alone" and "You Are Never Away" and Kern's "I Dream Too Much" and "Let's Begin."

It is a daring man who will attempt to follow Ethel Merman in the elucidation of "I Get a Kick Out of You," but Billy Daniels does it successfully in his own style (Mercury 5585, 89¢). Analyzing the feat, it appears at once that he has control of two of the same requisites that Ethel brings to the job: (1) power and (2) irony. He treats this piece of Porter as the comic bravura it is, and lams the dickens out of it. We would like to hear him sing "What Can I Say After I Say I'm Sorry," but Eddie Fisher's healthy, rhythmic version of the old classic will do very nicely (RCA Victor 20-4037, 89¢). The subscribers are warned that Philip Wylie's efforts have been in vain and something called "My Mom" is sung on the other side.

Perry Como, the retired barber, as we have noted before, has a voice and taste of great sentimental *délicatesse*, and we feel it almost a civic duty to report that he has been researching in the best stacks and has made three discs of standard tunes which are not our own particular favorites but are admired by millions, "More Than You Know," "Without a Song," "It's Only a Paper Moon," "Me and My Shadow," "I Found a Million Dollar Baby," and "That Old Gang of Mine" (RCA Victor, 20-4033, 20-4034, 20-4035, 89¢ apiece). Como at his best might be described as a man who takes the mawk out of the mawkish, an art he shares with Frank Sinatra. Given good, simple material—say Irving Berlin's "All Alone"—Sinatra is nothing less than perfect, and when he does "Come Back to Sorrento" in Italian he does about as much for that schmalz as we have a right to expect (Columbia 39118, 89¢).

If you must have polkas, and those of Dvorak and Smetana seem insufficiently numerous, you can at least have the iridescent, musicianly "Polkas by Dorsey"—brother Jimmy this time (Columbia LP 6165, $3). The talent here seems much better than the material, and so it does in the latest production of one of our favorite dance musicians, "Claude Thornhill Encores" (Columbia LP 6164, $3) in which the pianist and his orchestra seem to be warming up, skilfully, for some delicious achievement which never comes off. We prefer Ray Noble's fast horsing around with "The Sheik of Araby" (Columbia 39195, 89¢).

—WILDER HOBSON.

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OPERATIC MISCELLANY

(*Continued from page 50*)

Dunn, and Schering have lavished on composers so various as Purcell, Pergolesi, Carey, James Hook, and Anonymous. Not for lovers of old music faithfully performed, then, these recordings will nevertheless have considerable appeal for seekers after light, easily understandable entertainment expertly presented. The recordings as such are excellent.

"Two Thousand Years of Music," an anthology compiled and arranged by Curt Sachs, was first issued in Germany on Parlophone records more than fifteen years ago. In well-selected brief excerpts it presented a pell-mell panorama of music from ancient Greece to Johann Sebastian Bach—vocal, instrumental, and ensemble. Decca (which formerly issued the set here on shellac 78's) has now made this time-worn recording available on two LP's—and has encased them in one of the most confusing packages I have ever met and struggled with. No performers' names are given. The eight pages of accompanying text (not, I hasten to point out, signed by Dr. Sachs) either explain the wrong things or explain the right things wrongly. Compositions and movements (one by Handel, for example) are often not named at all. Under the heading "Chamber Music," side 4 lists excerpts from Bach and Handel as "about 1700"—when both composers were fifteen years old and decades away from the music here performed.

As it comes from these LP dubbings most of "Two Thousand Years of Music" cannot be listed as pleasurable listening. To be made really useful for schools it would have to be rehoused in an album including clear information clearly presented. To determine its purpose or value in its present dress is all but impossible. Ancient music, the music of yesterday, the music of today, music for pleasure, music for study (it does not seem to me to matter which or what)—music worth recording at all deserves proper performance, the best in contemporary recording, and packaging in albums or folders that really name, explain, and assist. Of all the records here reviewed only that of Puccini's "Suor Angelica" meets the minimum standards we have, in 1951, the right to demand. That is to say that it is performed properly as composed, attractively and vitally handled by the artists involved, recorded magnificently, and sent forth to record purchasers accompanied by accurate information, a clearly printed text as sung, and a really English translation.

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

Fact or Fantasy?

SIR: Harvey Taylor's adventures with his three-speed phonograph ["Three Speeds Forward," March RECORDINGS] prove that a fertile mind is still a match for our technological way of life. . . My main reason for writing is to inform Mr. Taylor that his "silly" notion of composers writing for different speeds has had a beginning in at least one instance that I know of. Louis Appelbaum, who has written some impressive scores for motion pictures, has had some of the music of the film "Challenge: Science Against Cancer" recorded at one speed and then run at a considerably more rapid speed when it was re-recorded for the sound track.

JOHN L. MEYER.

Bayside, N. Y.

Toscanini, Old and New

SIR: Regarding the Editor's Note in a recent communication on your letter's page [March RECORDINGS], I think it strange that RCA Victor could not or would not transfer the Toscanini "Midsummer Night's Dream" of comparatively recent release to LP whereas they did dub his performance of the "Grand Canyon Suite," which surely is much older.

ROBERT STARRETT.

Long Island City, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *On the face of it this would look like a plausible commentary. However, RCA Victor sources we have consulted make mention of important facts not concerned with the relative age of the recording, particularly the wide dynamic range of the "Midsummer Night's Dream" recording. Adaptation to LP would blanket the pianissimo passages under surface sound or lose them entirely, I am told.*

Weingartner on LP

SIR: With RCA Victor dubbing its not-so-old "Collector's Items," surely Columbia cannot lag behind. What happened to the project for reviving some Weingartners, beginning with the Beethoven No. 1 and No. 8 backed up against each other?

PARSIFAL.

Arlington, Va.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *What, indeed?*

Carpenter's "Perambulator"

SIR: May I mention to you two musical ideas or events that have just joined each other although they took place thirty-five years apart. The more recent is the recording of Ogden Nash's amusing verses for the Saint-Saëns "Carnival of the Animals" and the mention by Howard Hanson of John Alden Carpenter's "Adventures in a Perambulator" [March RECORDINGS]. The other event, thirty-five years ago, was the printing of some particularly charming program notes for the "Adventures" when they were first played in New York.

G. W. BARNES.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The citation of the notes suggests that they would serve well as narrative commentary for the Carpenter suite. The score is thoroughly deserving of recording in any case.*

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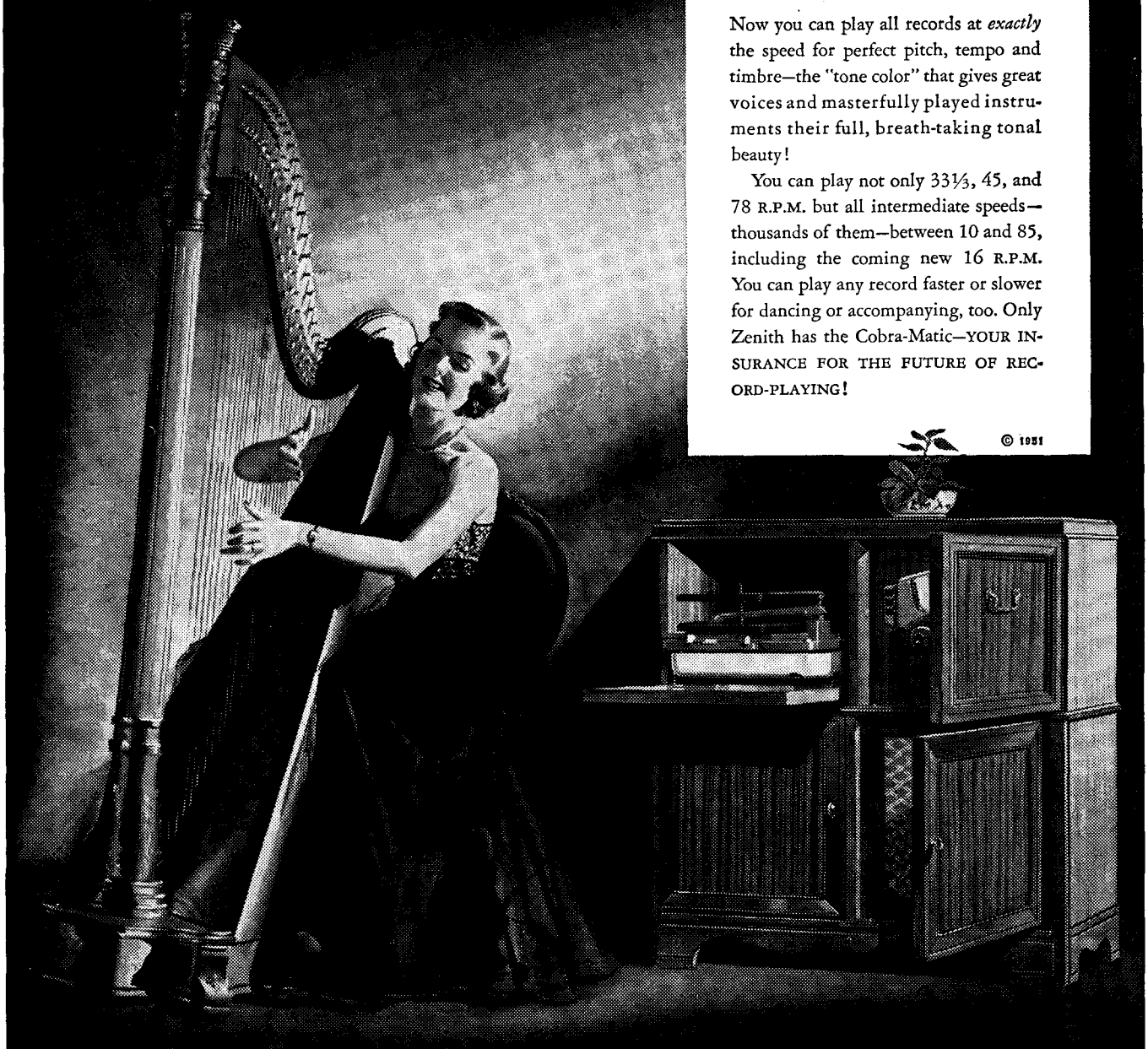

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